MS 3251

ORAL HISTORY

CLEMMIE SHUCK BARRY

California Historical Society

Women in California Collection

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CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Oral History of

Clemmie Shuck Barry

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STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON Clemmie Barry

For the California Historical Society
Women in California Collection Oral History Interview

Name Clemmie Shuck Barry Date of Birth Aug. 24 1901

Place of birth Clay County, Nebraska

Name of husband Ivan Agureeff

Date of marriage June 1929 Place of Marriage New York City

If marriage terminated, when April - 1934

If remarried, name of husband Duke Barry

Date of remarriage July 10 1963 Place Chico, Calif.
(Feb 22, 1937) Washington DC)

Children

Name None Date of Birth

Name Date of Birth

Name Date of Birth

Name Date of Birth

Parents

Mother (maiden name) Cora Odessa Hill

Where born Decatur, Illinois Date of Birth 1868

Date of Death 1947

Father's name Clement Irving Shuck

Where born Madison Co. Indiana Date of Birth 1863

Date of Death 1933

Date of Marriage 1888 Place of Marriage Decatur, Ill

Grandparents

Mother's side Name of father Robert Hill

Date of birth ? Date of Death 1900

Name of Mother (maiden) Permelia Stith

Date of birth — Date of Death 1915

(see next page)

Stateistical information on _____

Grandparents (cont'd)
Father's side

Name of father Andrew Hill
Date of Birth ? Date of Death 1867
Name of Mother (maiden) Kerr
Date of birth ? Date of Death 1866

My Brothers and Sisters

Name Robert Francis Shuck Date of Birth 1888
~~Hazel~~ Date of Death 1940
Name Hazel Shuck Date of Birth 1890
Date of Death 1944
Name Pearl Shuck Date of Birth 1892
Date of Death 1908

Comments I do not have access to the family bible where detailed information is recorded.

Ethel Alice Shuck Date of Birth 1893
Date of Death Still living

Elmer Bryan Shuck Date of Birth 1896
Date of death 1972

Clennis
Cora Esther Shuck Date of Birth 1904
Date of Death Still living
Rosa Edith Shuck Date of birth 1904
Date of death 1976

California Historical Society
Women in California Collection

Interview History

Oral history of CLEMMIE SHUCK BARRY
Born August 24, 1901, at the town of Edgar, Clay County, Nebraska.

Now living in an apartment in Kentfield, California.

Interviews held on:

October 6, 1975
October 13, 1975
October 20, 1975
November 2, 1975
November 9, 1975
November 21, 1975
December 7, 1975
July 26, 1978

Interviewer: Lucy Kendall

Time of interviews: Approximately 12½ hours

Conduct of the Interview

The following is a partial transcript of the interview held with Clemmie Barry as part of the collection on trade union and left wing women. There was little preparation outside of the sending of a chronological outline which Ms. Barry proceeded to follow throughout the interview. She was sent more specific questions prior to each session. The questions were not particularly perceptive and the focus was basically on her "life" nad her role as an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

Knowing now a little more about research, questioning, and the narrator-interviewer relationship, the interviewer was pleasantly surprised by the transcript tapes. More information exists than she expected to find, partly due to the length of the interview, and certainly mainly due to the memory and capability of the narrator to place herself back into her early life and experience, and to develop her thinking about those periods.

Often we turned off the tape (which I later found to be a definite no) to peruse the interview outline. This naturally led to a continued and uninterrupted narrative.

In going over Ms. Barry's life, it was decided not to ask questions about her experiences working in department stores. These experiences have been covered in other ways by other women, as in Pink Collar Worker by L.K. Howe, and and by an oral history interview with Marion Brown Sills conducted by Sue Cobble for this same series.

After two and a half years and the typing and reading of the manuscript, interviewer felt it incumbent upon her to ask for a follow up meeting to cover some of the more obvious (now) inadequacies of the interview. Two additional tapes were made which to some extent develop Ms. Barry's background and her activities as an organizer and as a woman worker.

Editing

Some editing was done in the process of transcribing, and additional corrections were handled by Ms. Barry. Certain anecdotes have been deleted because the transcriber felt they did not add content to the story.

Indexing

Since the whole interview was not transcribed, there is no full index. In place of this, the tape index follows the transcript.

The Interviewee

Ms. Barry lives in a small apartment filled with growing, healthy plants, excellent prints of good artists, tons of books, and various momentoes of Dick Barry's trips made when he was a ship's officer.

She is tall, outgoing, effervescent woman with a warm personal regard for every living thing, and a vast reservoir of love to give.

Despite the overwhelming job of taking full responsibility for the care of her husband who had a severe vascular cerebral hemorrhage in 1960, she continued to be an active woman.

Having lost their life savings to hospitals and doctors, they are living on Social Security and extended assistance. Several months ago Mr. Barry become so ill, after another stroke, Mrs. Barry was unable to continue the home care. He is now in a convalescent hospital where Ms. Barry visits him almost every day.

At the time of the first interviews she was active as an organizer of Emeritus College in Marin Community College. She is now busy working with the California Legislative Council on Aging. In addition, and important to her, she is a leader in Co-Conseling. Recently she evolved a program in the community where she aids women who are the sole care (as she was for many years) of their incapacitated husbands. She is also an appointed member of the Marin County Commission on Aging, member of the Board of Marin Senior Day Care, and many other committees dealing with nursing home legislation and related topics.

Ms. Barry can indeed be considered the spokesperson for the older citizens of Marin County. She has been exposed to the media through television appearances and newspaper articles about her work. She is respected for her opinions

and activities and is frequently called upon for advice, or to participate in various aspects of community life, particularly in relation to older citizens.

Narrative Account of the Interview

As previously mentioned, the interview follows Ms. Barry's life chronologically, from her girlhood on a Nebraska farm through her childhood years, her schooling, her teaching at the same country school she attended as a child. She was the only one of the family's eight children to attend college. Active in the Methodist Church, she obtained a scholarship to college where she earned her way through working for ministers, as a playground director, participating in YWCA work, and so on.

During her college years she became active in the Cosmopolitan Club and helped put out a paper called Diogenes' Lantern. She met political people,and incidentally her first husband, through contact with Russian students at Colorado School of Mines.

After graduation and marriage they moved to New York where she worked at various jobs from department store clerk to YWCA secretary.

Due to the disagreement with YWCA officials over their attitude toward striking hosiery mill girls, Clemmie left the Y. A friend suggested she work for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. She was offered a job as organizer and accepted.

During this period she had joined the Communist Party, but, since she attended no meetings and received no direction or assignments, she was just a "paper" member.

From then on she was active during the major organizing campaigns in the South engineered by the Amalgamated, and participated in organizing Friedman Harry Marx where the landmark victory was that the Supreme Court ruled that the National Labor Relations Board/Act was constitutional.

By this time she had left her first husband and had met Dick Barry at a Washington, D.C. party to raise money for the onion pickers in New Jersey. They subsequently decided to go West, and landed in San Francisco where she again worked at department stores and various other jobs until she became a social worker for the State of California.

At this time she made connections with the Communist Party and became an active, organized member.

She and others participated in a trade union campaign to organizer social workers into the State, County and Municipal Workers Union. They were called before the Tenney-Yorty State Un-American Committee. As a result of this hearing and her refusal to answer questions she was blacklisted and lost her job.

The story then continues with her activities during the war and a short lived post with the Communist Party after which she and Dick left San Francisco and moved to Marin County.

The next job was a real estate saleswoman where she managed to get in trouble because she sold their own property to two Black families, and consequently lost that job.

Then back to the department stores for another four year stint.

At this point Ms. Barry left the Communist Party due to political disagreement.

A move to Westwood, California followed. Then her own trouble with a detached retina in one eye, followed immediately by Dick's ceretral hemorrhage.

The narrative continues with her activities in Marin County and her various community volunteer roles.

The last two tapes cover briefly some more reminiscences on her childhood, her role as a woman, her organizing activities, and her thinking on today's problems.

July 28, 1978

Lucy Kendall

NYC

April 29, 1931

Dear gang!

Robin flew in yesterday and was a mighty welcome bird. All except two missing letters (moze + Mom's) were much enjoyed.

It is hard to think of spring planting and so on here as the nearest spring we get is the jonquils that I buy for 15¢ a dozen. One floor of Macy's is given over to shrubbery, pine trees - rows of packages of flower seeds and bulbs of all description. Each morning as I walk through them on my way to the lockers, the men are watering them and the earthy smell always makes me weep.

We had a nice Sunday over in New Jersey two-weeks ago. I found dog tooth violets, hepatica & anemones, as well as skunks cabbage and other green marshy plants. It has been so cold & raw this spring that one can't enjoy sitting on rocks or the ground either. Everytime we plan an outing it rains and of course we are all glad for moisture.

New York has changed to daylight saving time again. I am glad because I get home before the sun is down and makes so much better evening. Last night some of the boys dropped in to play a game or two. One fellow is with Westinghouse, just here from China 2 years. He had a match box (small one) that had some sort of machinery made of it for winding. When I came in he picked up Ivan's box and replaced it with the trick one. Dr. Wood soon passed after

and reached for the matches. As he picked it up it started a idiid purring exactly as one would expect an infernal machine. He almost jumped out of his skin and we all about fell over laughing. Tonight Dwy Achoy was up to dinner but when I came home she & Emily were both here with Joan. Emily had eaten so she had shortcake (berries 19¢ pint) with us & while we were eating Ed Stone dropped in so we squeezed out another portion. Then Gant Seng arrived so we had a good evening. We just finished washing the dishes (everyone has gone home) so I thought I'd start this epistle tonight never knowing when I'll finish it.

Joan is doing a little pottery job over at Columbia in the laboratory which pays a little and keeps him from worrying so much. He even was so ambitious that he prepared breakfast entirely alone this morning. I was quite overcome as it was the first time in the history.

We are terribly Bolsheuk when talking with Conservatives but we turned pale pink when we met up with Communists. We were at a colored home a few weeks ago — (colored people whose culture and genuine sincerity & living made me feel like your country cousin —) when we met a negro lawyer who has just returned from 3 years in Russia — a red red Communist. One believes absolutely in them. Can yet their method irks us. I honestly believe Germany will turn "red" in the next two years & they'll have all Europe by 1945. One can believe

he sees the way the workers are exploited for the benefit of the employer. At Macy's — they are remodeling the whole place with the most gorgeous fixtures, a setting background for the luxuries which they sell to people who do not need them. The people who work for them get no benefits — the environment of the luxury during working hours. I see no way to change it except by way of war. I fear I am losing my pacifistic tendencies. Certainly, I am against a war between capitalist rulers, with the common devil doing the suffering & fighting but I actually believe the war between Capital & Labor is not far off. It's 10:30 so I must sleep. Rise up at 7 A.M. So bye bye, for now —

Clem

May 12, 1931

How time goes! I just haven't been able to get this laid going for some reason. After dinner I somehow hanker for my bed so I humor my lap - and after a hot bath, I tumble in. Ivan has the table set when I come in & I've usually prepared something that is quick so dinner is not a complicated meal. He has been getting breakfasts, which gives me an extra 15 minutes to sleep in the mornings. I am liking my job, even though it is hard to stand all day. I shouldn't take anything for the training & experience one gets in it.

We have spent the last two Sundays in Riverside Drive watching ourselves. The fleet is in the Hudson - we can see the gray warriors lying in front of us - and the walks are full of sailors and their girls.

Grant Leong left for China on Thursday. Ed. King today and Ivy goes to Trinidad on August. Its hard to see them leave because they are going with such an "unknown". To go back to China a communist, means that you lose your [illegible] immediately. Yet the present government is only marking time - I think China's only salvation is a Soviet Govt. As the little boy said, "Revolution is a form of Government abroad"!

We were very excited one day last week when four Spanish nuns came into the department with an interpreter to buy dresses. The saleslerk who actually saw them undress! — said they were buying plain clothes + wigs to go to Spain on business since the Anti Church movement has been so strong.

Our plans are yet very indefinite. I feel Ivan's best contacts are here, so all we can do is hang on & wait & something happens. I hate to spend another summer in the dust + heat but I can't change jobs before September.

Let try to be better next time.

Much much love to all

Clara

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
EIGHTH AND WASHINGTON STREETS

MRS. WM. B. AHRENS
PRESIDENT

MRS. MABEL W. WHITBECK
GENERAL SECRETARY

READING, PENNA.
PHONE 7317

February 13, 1933

Dear folks Mama's letter came this morning, I was glad to get it. We have had lots of snow here but it hasn't been as cold as 6 below. Whee! That is awful. Last year some folks said the Lord sent the open winter on account of folks being short of food & fuel— I wonder why he sends this..

A week ago Saturday I took 2 girls to a conference at Philadel In Pottstown where the streets are paved with brick, I ran into another car & it cost $72 to repair mine. Just about finished me. The other fellow was slowing up to turn & gave no signal. I put on my brake but it [illegible] that just makes runners out of your wheels - and I just slid right on. Bent up front fender, smashed the light, bu it missed the radiator— and no one was hurt. Now I'm leaving the car in the garage and ride the trolley to work.

The whole situation here is pretty black. Unless we get a militant group of farmers and unemployed demanding what the need, there is absolutely no hope. I have little hope in Roosevelt's Cabinet. Here in Reading the socialists are becoming more revolutionary & I think we should. I still feel caught between the devil & the deep blue sea. The Community Chest is tottering it is controlled by the capitalists to keep folks contented— & our folks are doomed & to probably a good thing. I do not know if we can punch our Contract by June / I may be work

MEMBER OF COMMUNITY CHEST

home.

Evan's plans are still pending as we haven't heard a word from Yap Chu Phayer Nicholas. We have a bit of money saved up for this trip - It is in the bank, but sometimes one feels that he should pull it out.

I was certainly surprised to read about Frances Isham's engagement — Well - power to her! I should send her a card but I doubt if I ever write.

Uncle Lee's being secretary of Clay Co's holiday Assoc. impressed me more. Gee! How I wish the farmers could stick together on their demands. It has buoyed up industrial workers a lot to have the farmers' joining with them.

Tell Byrle that I've forgotten whose turn it is to write. I have an idea it is mine, but tell him to be generous.

Tell the whole gang hello! I'm glad you're not being scientifically starved as the unemployed in Pa are at $1.25 per week.

I can't tell when I may be seein' you. I get homesick sometimes - and after Evan leaves it will probably be worse.

Much much love,

Clemmie

CLEMMIE BARRY INTERVIEW - 11/75

Picture of family. She is second person from right.

Peach orchard - Fodder Ridge, Clay County, Nebraska 1904(?)

Original in possession of Ms. Barry

CLEMMIE BARRY INTERVIEW 11/75

One room school house where she attended school, and later taught school.

Prarie View School, Clay County, Nebraska 1909(?)
Clemmie is third from right - back row

Original in possession of Ms. Barry

CLEMMIE SHUCK BARRY Norfolk, Virginia, 1934

Neg. #22359 Original in Portrait files

HINGTON TIMES
THE NATIONAL DAILY
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1937

CLEMMIE BARRY TQPE #3

WASHINGTON HOUSEWIVES JOIN PICKET LINE

League of Shoppers Aids Strikers

THE WASHINGTON LEAGUE WOMENS SHOPPERS INDORSES THE RIGHT of WORKERS TO ORGANIZE
CONSUMERS REFUSE TO BUY FROM SWEATSHOP MANUFACTURERS & WORKERS
W.L. WASHINGTON LEAGUE OF WOMENS SHOPPERS PROTESTS CONDITIONS IN THIS SHOP!

MEMBERS OF the Washington League of Women Shoppers, a newly-organized group, picketing before the National Pants Company plant, 410 First St. S. E., where girl employes have been on strike. The three in the foreground are, left to right: Mrs. B. A. Gould, treasurer; Mrs. Mildred Burk and Mrs. Charles Wood Collier, executive secretary. Photo copyright, Washington Times. All rights reserved.

Labor

3 Knots Untied In Labor Skein In Richmond

Three knots in labor's tangled skein were untied here yesterday while a fourth last night appeared to be in the making.

In John Marshall High School auditorium several hundred employees of the Friedman-Harry Marks Clothing Company accepted a working agreement between the firm and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, a C. I. O. affiliate.

The final hurdle in the long strike of carpenters and millmen at the American Furniture and Fixture Company was taken when the company yesterday agreed to release men hired during the strike and to take back all strikers.

A strike of Negro stemmers at the I. N. Vaughan and Company tobacco plant was settled with the aid of Frank Kruck, State labor conciliator.

Pickets representing about a dozen printing pressmen began parading last night in front of the plant of J. W. Fergusson & Sons, printers and publishers, Fourteenth and Franklin Streets, in anticipation of a strike there this morning. After about an hour pickets were called in until 6 A. M. today.

Nearly Unanimous

The Friedman-Harry Marks agreement, signed by Louis M. Friedman for the company and Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated for the workers, was accepted almost unanimously after a brief spirited fight from the floor for greater concessions. Principal objections were from a bloc which demanded a closed shop not provided for in the agreement.

Other objections centered around specific overtime pay and holidays not carried in agreement. Amalgamated officers explained the contract was identical with that under which 125,000 clothing workers are now operating throughout the United States.

Highlights of the agreement are:

The company recognizes the right of its employees to bargain collectively and recognizes the Amalgamated Clothing Workers as their sole bargaining agency.

A 36-hour week is established, with a 12 per cent wage increase effective May 15 and a minimum wage of $14.40 a week. A committee of one union representative and one from the company will study the condition of employees not receiving a living wage and the

but preference in employment will be given members of the union.

The agreement is for three years, expiring May 15, 1940, but wage agreements will be renewed annually.

An hourly minimum wage of 40 cents is established, except that not more than 10 per cent of the firm's employees may receive not less than 70 per cent of this minimum. This provision is for the benefit of superannuated and subnormal employees who need work.

All disputes arising under the agreement must be submitted to an impartial arbitrator. No strikes, stoppages or lockouts are permitted under the agreement.

Should 51 per cent of the firm's employees so desire, the firm agrees to check their union dues from the pay roll.

Miss Shuck Is Chairman

Miss Clemie Shuck, who almost alone has organized more than 90 per cent of the Friedman-Harry Marks Company's approximately 800 employees within 30 days after the Supreme Court ordered the firm to observe the Wagner labor relations act, acted as chairman. She introduced bearded, ascetic Jacob S. Potofsky, assistant to Mr. Hillman, who outlined the union's work which began unauspiciously in 1935 and ended yesterday with the signed agreement.

"We are glad to see justice done even though it is a little [illegible]

ACCEPT UNION AGREEMENT—Part of the crowd of Friedman-Harry Marks workers which jammed John Marshall High School auditorium yesterday and voted almost unanimously to accept a working agreement negotiated for them by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. Miss Clemie Shuck, Amalgamated organizer (center left) comes through for the cause when she leads the crowd in singing "Glory! Glory! Amalgamated." Right center, Jacob S. Potofsky, assistant Amalgamated president, addresses the workers. Below, Charles Weinstein, Amalgamated official, explains the agreement to 11 of the 19 workers who were fired by the firm for alleged union activities in 1935 and re-employed under the Supreme Court decision upholding the Wagner Labor Act. Left to right (front) they are Robert L. Morgan, Dorothy McAden, Annie May Rogers, Mrs. Luella Nichols and Archer Brock; rear, Isaac Kenney, Mrs. Maggie High, Reba Holder, Madelyn Clark, Mrs. Doris Koch and Beatrice Holzbach.

—Staff Photos by Joe Colognori.

Potofsky said. "This is the beginning of a new day in our relations with the Marks company.

"Through the power of the union it was not necessary here to have a prolonged strike and through this agreement you are getting much more power than you ever had. But you must remember we are not taking over the company; we are not going to run the plant, but we are going to have something to say now about working and wage conditions.

"Now that you have power, I ask that you use it with discretion. In union shops, we get privileges and power, but we also get responsibilities."

Charles Weinstein, manager of the Philadelphia Amalgamated market and a regional director of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, read the agreement and withstood a barrage of questions afterward. Philip Rudich, manager of the Southern Jersey joint board of the Amalgamated, spoke after the workers had voted to accept the agreement.

Before the meeting swung into business, the workers led by Miss Shuck stood and roared "America" with reassuring fervor. Then they sang one called "Glory! Glory! Amalgamated" almost in a whisper and did somewhat better with "Solidarity."

The agreement, which has been in the making since organization efforts started here, was signed some time ago.

Carpenters in Accord

American Furniture and Fixture Company carpenters, 60 of whom walked out seven weeks ago, reached an agreement last week with the management. The final detail was settled yesterday when the company agreed to rehire the strikers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, superseding men employed during the strike.

The stemmers' strike at the Vaughan plant, which has been in progress several days, was ended by compromise. Under its terms, Mr. Kruck said, workers will receive wages amounting to "practically 10 per cent."

Bright stemmers, he said, who had been receiving 6 cents a pound asked 10 cents and will receive 8 cents. Drop leaf stemmers, receiving about 7 cents a pound asked 10 cents and got 9 cents. Women job workers, who had received 15 cents an hour asked 25 cents and got 20 cents. Men job workers receiving 25 cents asked 35 cents and got 30 cents. The agreement includes an 8-hour day, 40-hour week and time-and-half for overtime.

tended by workers in other Richmond stemming plants, he said, and added that 467 of the 469 men and women employed at the Vaughan plant have signified their intention of joining the Tobacco Stemmers and Laborers Union.

Improvements in sanitary conditions at the plant were agreed to by the management and the workers' committee, affiliated with the independent stemmers union formed here recently, was recognized as the worker's bargaining agency, Mr. Kruck said.

The incipient Fergusson printing company strike, third in Richmond since the Wagner decision, is based on "intimidation and coercion" of union workers, officials of the Richmond Printing Pressmen's Union said last night. They charged the company violated the National Labor Relations Act in that last month they formed the Fergusson Employees Association, a company union and circulated applications for membership through foremen and that the night shift was laid off and old union employees laid off in favor of new men.

Labor officials said the Fergusson firm did not refuse to bargain collectively with the press-

Washington News - Dec 21

THE WASHING

Joining a Union Becomes 'Respectable' in South; Organizers Press Drive

Bosses Appear Confused; Effect of Court Decisions Growing in Virginia; Expect Trouble Further Down

By THOMAS L. STOKES

RICHMOND—The Supreme Court decisions upholding the Wagner Labor Act are proving potent yeast in the South.

The leaven is active among the workers, according to C. I. O. organizers who are here from various quarters of the South for one reason or another, some for a concentrated drive in this city and state. Chief among the organizers here is John A. Peel, regional director of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee for Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee.

BECOME 'RESPECTABLE'

A very interesting thing is happening among the workers in this section. Union activity is emerging from the hush-hush stage; slowly, to be sure, but certainly. The workers are beginning to raise their voices from a whisper to a conversational tone. And so, too, are the organizers who once slipped into Southern towns secretly and maintained a sort of grapevine communication system with their sympathizers in factories. Joining a labor union has suddenly become legal and respectable, and enthusiasm among the workers is spreading as this feeling pervades the factories. "Boss consciousness" still exists, especially among the older workers who have grown gray under the paternal system. But "organization fever" is spreading fast among the youngsters.

tom and are thereby able to exert undercover pressures.

No quick and easy surrender is expected there. A fight is anticipated.

VIRGINIANS SEE DANGER

Some difficulty likewise is expected in the small towns in Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia which induced industries in union-protected areas elsewhere to come there by such favors as tax exemptions, free buildings, free power, water and light because of the pay rolls they furnish—altho in most cases at very low wages—city officials, chambers of commerce, business men and sometimes even workers seek to protect these migratory industries.

One effect of unionization, it is believed, will be to check this southward migration, for the lack of unions and the lax labor laws have been the principal reasons for the movement.

An awakening to the danger of this sort of migration is evident in Virginia, which has a few garment plants that moved from the North. Secretaries of Virginia chambers of commerce, in a conference April 14, adopted resolutions condemning any sort of "artificial" inducements or subsidies to attract industry.

BOSSES CONFUSED

The bosses are confused and uncertain. Hard-boiled ones who would not even see an organizer are now talking with them, preserving—a good many of them—a sort of strained good humor. Some of them are busy with their lawyers finding out what it is all about.

Here in Richmond, a characteristic southern community, workers from several isolated industries have come voluntarily to the textile organizers asking for help in forming a union.

Organization is moving apace here. An agreement has just been signed with the Richmond Piece Dye Works, granting wage increases of 22½ to 37 per cent by Mr. Peel and Joseph W. Knapnik of New York, president of the Federation of Dyers, Printers, Finishers and Bleachers. This is a significant victory.

TEXTILE GROUP ACTIVE

Two hundred and fifty Negro tobacco workers have been blanketed into a union, with wage increases and shorter hours, under A. F. of L. auspices. The Tobacco Workers International Union already has negotiated wage and hour agreements with Liggett & Myers and the American Tobacco Co., and organization is beginning with the Philip Morris plant.

The T. W. O. C. is busy organizing at the Friedman-Harry Marks Clothing Co., one of the five firms involved in the Supreme Court decisions. Another objective is the huge Ampthill plant of the E. I. Dupont De Nemours Co.

The T. W. O. C. is opening headquarters here in the next few days for a concentrated campaign.

MAJOR HURDLES LOOM

Peel and other organizing leaders here report progress generally in the preliminary campaign. It will necessarily be gradual, for in some respects this is pioneering. He expects definite results within 30 to 45 days.

The major hurdles will be the big, well-financed textile corporations in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama which fought off the unions in the 1935 strike; especially those which control mill towns from top to bot-

CLEMMIE BARRY TAPE #3

RECEIVED AT

STANDARD TIME INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE

Postal Telegraph

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Commercial Cables · Marconi Radio · Cable Radio

TELEGRAMS · CABLEGRAMS · RADIOGRAMS

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DL	DAY LETTER
NL	NIGHT LETTER
NM	NIGHT MESSAGE
LCO	DEFERRED CABLE
NLT	NIGHT CABLE LETTER
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Form 16L

N133 85 SER=BY NEWYORK NY 28 321P

1937 APR 28 PM 3 50

MISS CLEMMIE SHUCK=

HOTEL RICHMOND OR LYRIC THEATRE RICHMOND VIR=

CONVEY TO THE FRIEDMAN HARRY MARKS WORKERS ASSEMBLED TONIGHT MY CONGRATULATIONS ONTHEIR FIRST UNION VICTORY THE ABOLITION OF THE UNIT SYSTEM STOP OUR NEXT STOP IS TO OBATIN FULL RECOGNITION AND A UNION AGREEMENT AN CONFIDENT WE WILL SUCCEED IN THE NEAR FUTURE STOP MEANTIME DRIVE AHEAD FOR COMPLETE UNIONIZATION HOPE TO BE WITH YOU AT NEXT MEETING SOON STOP ONLY THROUGH UNITY OF PURPOSE WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR GOAL STOP ASK RUDICK TO LOOK ME UP LORD BALTIMORE HOTEL ABOUT NINE OCLOCK MORNING=

JACOB S POTOFSKY.

DAILY WORLD

For Security, Democracy, Peace

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1940

Entered as Sec
San Francisco,

THIRD

Yorty Probers Admit Plot To Blacklist All Unionists

Pickets Protest Oakland SRA Dismissals

OAKLAND, April 26.—Protesting the Olson administration's "blitzpurge" of the Alameda county SRA, some 200 social workers, office employes, and jobless today picketed the state relief administration's local offices. The CIO State, County and Municipal Workers of America, Local 91, called the demonstration at noon to denounce political manipulation of relief and firing of 26 SRA employes, 25 of whom are SCMWA members. They were dismissed by B. C. Willford, provisional director installed by SRA state chieftain Walter Chambers, who replaced County Director Patrick Gallagher.

Shouting "Stop Politics in Relief," and chanting "Reorganize Willford Out of the SRA," the demonstrators jammed the entire block around the offices at 8th and Harrison streets, while Oakland police took photographs. Union and non-union employes remaining in SRA

Red Hunter

SAM YORTY
. . . You've discarded your mind.

Threaten Witness With Dismissal From SRA Jobs

SAN FRANCISCO, April 26—The Yorty "Little Dies" Committee today admitted its objective is to create a blacklist for union members in public or private employment.

Angered by steadfast refusal of members of the CIO State, County & Municipal Workers of America to answer improper questioning, Assemblyman James Phillips (R., Alameda county) bullied witness Carl Schoning, union treasurer:

"Don't you realize your refusal to answer our questions, will identify you as a Communist, and that the record of this committee will be kept forever open to the public in Sacramento?

"Don't you know that if you ever in the future want to seek public or private employment, you will face that record?"

Clemmie Shuck, union member and former organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in the East, was similarly threatened.

CLEMMIE BARRY TAPE #3

PITTSBURGH PRESS

TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1937

Bulwarked by Wagner Act Rulings, Unions Seek Foothold In 'Old Dominion'—Bitter Opponents Now Joke With Labor Emissaries

By THOMAS L. STOKES
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

RICHMOND, Va., April 20—The unions are moving into conservative Virginia, the home of anti-New Deal Carter Glass, on the wings of the Supreme Court decisions upholding the Wagner Labor Act.

I stood on the sidewalk before the Friedman-Harry Marks Clothing Co. here, one of the five firms involved in the momentous decisions, and watched a campaign of unionization begin with distribution of pamphlets and union cards by two young women of the CIO Textile Workers Organizing Committee, Miss Klemmie Shuck and Miss Hilda Cobb. They were assisted by three carpenters, A. F. of L. members, on strike from a local furniture company and who lent their services for the afternoon.

Mr. Stokes

They passed out their pamphlets without molestation as the workers streamed from the building and bosses, big ones and little ones, stood by and watched with occasional good-humored chaffing.

Almost Miracle

This was something approaching a miracle. For the Friedman-Harry Marks Co. won its place in Supreme Court history by firing eight workers for union activity.

The legal phrases of Chief Justice Hughes, translated into actuality, become here in Richmond, as far as physical things go, a four-story brick building, with other buildings like it alongside and railroad tracks in front, where 1000 people earn their living; and, as for the intangibles, the right finally to join a labor union if they want to, under Uncle Sam's protection, in the effort to better their condition.

So, on a hot afternoon, the two young women and their helpers gathered along the sidewalk before the entrance to do their job—a bit nervously, wondering how they would be received, conscious that this was a big moment in lives already rich with experience in dealing with companies and workers.

A few workers emerged, the first trickle in the flood which rises and falls as the shifts are released between 3 and 5:30.

They took the pamphlets and walked away, reading as they went.

Officials Greet Organizers

Then, at a freight opening on the front of the building a few feet above the sidewalk, there appeared Morton Marks, president of the company, and Keeve Marks, secretary. They smiled down at the girl organizers and kidded with them. They said they would not interfere.

The two were joined by I. D. November, plant superintendent, who joined in the good-humored give and take.

A young girl worker emerged and received a pamphlet.

"Mr. Marks says it's all right for you to take one," one of the organizers called at the girl, and the president smiled.

It was he, according to testimony before the National Labor Board, who told a group of women employes in April, 1935, when the previous attempt to organize a union was made:

"I will fire every damn one that attends a union meeting."

He and his superintendent, also according to testimony, peeped through the windows of a Methodist Church at the first union meeting to see who attended. Three veteran workers were dismissed the next day. Subsequently the president hired a girl employe to spy on union meetings and report to him, according to testimony. And so on.

Change in Two Years

Now, two years later, union activity went on in broad daylight. After exchanging a few wisecracks, the officials withdrew.

From time to time workers poured out and were given pamphlets. The organizers finally walked away arm in arm with some of their former "contacts," and these expressed enthusiasm over the chance to organize.

"We were scared to breathe before," one woman said, "now it's different."

"We sho' to Gawd needs something," ejaculated a Negro presser.

One young man reported that several of his co-workers already had signed membership cards.

"Oh, I thought you were giving us something to eat," said one flapperish young worker.

"This'll help you get more to eat," retorted one of the carpenters merrily.

Few Are Hesitant

A few of the older women were hesitant, and some threw away the pamphlets. Altogether, about 15 were discarded.

For a moment during the afternoon it looked like trouble when two policemen drove up in a roadster. The organizers handed them pamphlets. They looked at them and one, serious, said his colleague would make the "call." The other policeman did go into the building. But when he returned they drove off.

The day's work for the organizers was a mere beginning. The drudgery will follow, the enlistment of members to get a majority in the union.

Mr. Marks has done nothing yet about reinstating the eight dismissed workers, as the Court ordered. The formal papers have not yet been issued. He would not discuss the situation, except to say:

"We are law-abiding citizens."

Because his clothing plant here was included in the scope of the Supreme Court decisions, others of similar character throughout the land also are included, and organizers are deployed far and wide.

Their day is here.

By The United Press

RICHMOND, Va., April 20—A working agreement was signed today by the Richmond Piece Dye Works, Inc., with the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, an affiliate of the Committee for Industrial Organization in the Richmond area.

About 168 workers are affected by the agreement. Wage increases averaging from about 18 to 22½ per cent over previous average wage scales of from 40 to 55 cents an hour were provided for as well as an eight-hour day, 40-hour week and a closed shop.

CONSERVATIVE VIRGINIA
IS LATEST OBJECTIVE O
CIO TEXTILE ORGANIZER

THIRD

HARRY BRIDGES LABOR DEFENSE
HALL ALLEY
SAN FRANCISCO CALIF
8

San Francisco
News
April, 1940

Yorty Probers Admit Plot To Blacklist All Unionists

Pickets Protest Oakland SRA Dismissals

OAKLAND, April 26.—Protesting the Olson administration's "blitzpurge" of the Alameda county SRA, some 200 social workers, office employes, and jobless today picketed the state relief administration's local offices.

The CIO State, County and Municipal Workers of America, Local 91, called the demonstration at noon to denounce political manipulation of relief and firing of 26 SRA employes, 25 of whom are SCMWA members. They were dismissed by E. C. Willford, provisional director installed by SRA state chieftain Walter Chambers, who replaced County Director Patrick Gallagher.

Shouting "Stop Politics in Relief," and chanting "Reorganize Willford Out of the SRA," the demonstrators jammed the entire block around the offices at 8th and Harrison streets, while Oakland police took photographs. Union and non-union employes remaining in SRA employe left their desks to join the demonstrators. Willford remained in his office.

Prominent members of the picket line were recently fired union members, Mrs. I. Nedelsky, a veteran SRA employe with six years seniority and David Barkley, former administrative aide to Gallagher.

Also marching were Mrs. Wilhelmina Loughrey, former personnel division chieftain, and recently fired officials of local 91 including, Sol Eidinoff, president; Ross Hedley, vice president and chairman of the union adjustment committee; Elsie Rego, treasurer; Mrs. Johnnie Grisham, past president and Sylvia Kohn, Victor Jewett and Hans Hoffman, members of the adjustment committee.

Leading trade unionists of Alameda county marching with the pickets were: John Jeffries, SCMWA state president; Paul Schlipf, CIO council secretary; Leo Turner, international representative of the CIO United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America; Mrs. Irene Kwas, Labors Union Unemployed Council and Frank Sul-

Red Hunter

SAM YORTY
'. . . You've discarded your mind.'

Hospital Parley Postponed a Week

SAN FRANCISCO, April 26.—Hospital workers here yesterday "called" the management of 10 private hospitals on the latter's bluff that they "aren't making any money and can't stand a wage raise."

As a result of the first direct meeting since April 19 between a Labor Council committee representing the hospital employes, and the Employers Council committee representing the hospitals, two schemes for searching the hospital account books were proposed.

Meetings were adjourned for a week, with each side promising to study the other's proposition.

Attorney Matthew O. Tobriner for the AFL Hospital and Institution Workers made the broadest proposal, "for an accountant to inspect any and all records of the hospitals to determine whether they can meet wage adjustments and whether such adjustments should be made."

Threaten Witness With Dismissal From SRA Jobs

SAN FRANCISCO, April 26—The Yorty "Little Dies" Committee today admitted its objective is to create a blacklist for union members in public or private employment.

Angered by steadfast refusal of members of the CIO State, County & Municipal Workers of America to answer improper questioning, Assemblyman James Phillips (R., Alameda county) bullied witness Carl Schoning, union treasurer:

"Don't you realize your refusal to answer our questions, will identify you as a Communist, and that the record of this committee will be kept forever open to the public in Sacramento?

"Don't you know that if you ever in the future want to seek public or private employment, you will face that record?"

Clemmie Shuck, union member and former organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in the East, was similarly threatened.

FIRING THREAT

Assemblyman Lee Bashore (R., Glendora) threatened: "If I've got any influence with the legislature, you won't be working for the state in 1941."

"Why put it off until 1941?" interposed Assemblyman Chester F. Gannon (D., Sacramento).

"We may take care of it on May 13 when the legislature reconvenes," added Bashore.

The bullying of witnesses by all committee members continued unabated at today's hearings, Gannon grumbling at Miss Shuck for her refusal to answer improper questions, "You're protecting yourself from perjury but I don't know from what else."

When Schoning answered that "the question of overthrowing the government never enters my mind," Chairman Samuel Yorty (D., Los Angeles) sneered: "I can tell you what you've done to your mind. You've just discarded your mind and accepted the Communist line."

Schoning earlier denied he was a member of the Communist Party.

CLEMMIE BARRY interview 11/75 Jim Dimicus, Clemmie Barry, Oleta O'CONNOR Yates
Local 110

Clemmie thinks this was taken during the war when the CPA was selling war bonds

Original in possession of Ms. Barry

Mrs. Berta Kessell,Scretary
Marin County Committee on Racial Discrimination
County Clerk's Office
San Rafael, California

Dear Mrs.Kessell:

During the past year I have received clippings from a number of people which described the continued efforts for racial equality in Marin. Since I was involved in a situation resulting from the sale of property to Negroes I would like to give the story to the Committee for what ever value it may be in your work.

In 1952 my husband and I owned about one and onehalf acressof land adjoining our property at 405 Montford Ave. in Homestead Velley. We had bought it in order to give more space to the back of the property in which we lived. We had no definite plans for use of the balance of the land. Inquiries regarding our plans for it were made at various times by carpenters who were members of Mr. Barry's Union, Local 1710, Mill Valley. Then he was asked by two Negro brothers, Roscoe McIntosh and David Smith if we would be willing to sell to them. He said he thought we might. He came home and told me of their request and asked how I felt about it. There was no problem for me to make a favorable decision. So we agreed to sell to the two families, dividing the land into two parcels of about one half acre each since it had a very steep grade. We sold the porperty for $600 per lot. Mr. Barry handled the transaction through the Marin Abstract Company.

I had been employed as a successful real estate saleswoman by Archer Forsyth, 20 Miller Avenue since June, 1947.

When Mr. McIntosh and Mr. Smith took possession and began clearing thier lots in October, 1952, a neighbor, Mrs. Anne Feliz, 504 Montford Ave stopped by Mr. Forsyth's office and asked if Negroes had bought the land on Montford Avenue.(She stated later when she became one of the many neighbors who gave support to the sale, that she was merely asking for information and had no idea that she would stir up any difficulty.) When I returned to the office Mr. Forsyth asked me if we had sold our land to Negroes. I said that we had. I do not remember what he said at that time. Later that afternoon when I returned from showing some property I learned that Mrs. Forsyth had gone around visiting all the other realtors.(It was not until the Council for Civic Unity began an investigation that it was learned that she had gone to the other realtors telling of my involvment in this sale and asking them their opinion of what Mr. Forsyth should do to me.)

Unfortunately, I had a very severe cold the following morning, so I telephoned the office to say I couldn't be in. Mr. Forsyth answered the phone. In a harriedvoice, quite unusal for him he told me that I was never to come back to the office. When

I asked why he said it was because we had sold to "those people". He then asked what I was going todo about it and I answered that of course I would fight such a dismissal with every means I could find.

The next day I went to see the President of the Marin Co. Real Estate Board, and Dan Deedy the Secretary to notify them of what had taken place. A few days later at the weekly breakfast meeting of salemen and brokers, Mr. Deedy refused to give me the floor orto read my statement. Over his strenucs objections I took the floor anyway and presented the facts of the situation and received some support from salespeople who were there.

The Council for Civic Unity took up my case and did all that they were able to obtain and publicize the facts and to seek my reinstatment. As is well known this never came about. Due to economic pressure & the time (Mr. Barry had been injured on a job and was unable to work) I took employment as a retail clerk in San Francisco. My real estate license lapsed as there was no broker willing to have it in his office.

Although the realtors claim that Negro homes in a community depreciate values, it is a matter of record that three older homes in the immediate area, the Vandevere property on La Verne, the Behrs 550 Montford, the Robertson's 345 Montford all sold for unusally good prices to white residents, all of them aware that there were Negroes in neighbors.

There were 8 families in the immediate neighborhood and only one was critical of the sale. Several other families who lived on Laverne Ave. also called to give their support.

During the past week we were happy to visit our old neighbors after a year's absence, andin every instance we were cordially re recieved. We enjoyed New Year's dinner with the McIntoshs, in their new home (completed after 6 years of long hard work). We feel that there is a small bit of the socalled "free world " on Montford Avenue.

Very truly yours,

Clemmie S. Barry

P.O.BOx 486
Westwood. Lassen County
California.
January 6, 1959

We came back to our new home forth[illegible] typing
today that there is a small bit of the
knowledge

Dear Dr. Kessell:

I am sincerely sorry to have been so negligent in answering your letters and in giving support to the work being done by the Committee on Discrimination. However, I have laboriously recalled what I hope will be the pertinent facts and even more laboriously typed a letter to the committee as you will see from the inclosed carbon. I think that I explained in my other letter that I had not saved the file of material when we moved. I think that I have remembered the essence of the struggle and I believe the statements to be correct.

It is almost inconceivable that even a "Committee" on Civil Fights in a county charter would be so vigorsly fought by such valiant upholders of democracy as a Dan Deedy. Was it on the basis of this provision alone that the charter was defeated? What a commentary on our "free world"!

Have you read "The Wall Between" by Anne Braden who was one of the persons involved in the Louisville case in 1954? I received it as a Christmas gift from a friend in Marin for which I am very grateful. Although I have read only 100 pages, it is interesting to note the similarity to our case in the beginning. Of course the outcome of their effort was tragic and they suffered such personal persecution. Her complete objectivity is an inspiration to anyone involved in similar struggle. I do recommend the book for the Marin Committee. It is published by the Monthly Review in N.Y. I believe that it was reviewed in The Chronicle.

I have the greatest admiration for you and Mrs. Kessell and all those who are keeping up the good fight. Many doors are opening nationally and on a world wide scale so that I believe more andmore people will be able to participate. So best wishes for 1959 to you in your work. May there be peace in the world,... and in outer space.

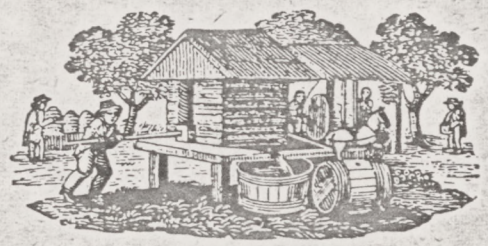
Sincerely,

Clemmie S. Barry

January 6,1959
P.O.Box 486
Westwood,Lassen Co
California

CLEMMIE BARRY INTERVIEW 11/75

PACIFIC SUN MARIN COUNTY CALIF



don stanley

R.I.P.--Ripoff in Progress

GIVEN the cost of food (chicken $1.30 a pound?) and the rise in rents, what's scheduled to happen to the old, the blind and the disabled probably shouldn't even happen to Ehrlichmann. But maybe it should, since what's going to happen to them is the Nixon Welfare Plan.

This "plan" will place ceilings on the money that o.b.d.'s receive under Old Age Assistance, which supplements Social Security payments in order to bring them to a tolerable level.

At the moment the old people get $400 a month as a couple and $230 if they're alone. The Nixon plan would cut these back to $195 and $130 respectively. Incredible! This is the 60-year-old man who has spent $10 million making "secure" his sundry coastal "White Houses."

Something *has* to be done, of course. As Clemmie Barry, a wonderfully active 72-year-old in Kentfield, says: "Maybe, just maybe, $195 a month might be fine in Mississippi. But not in California or New York or Pennsylvania."

Mrs. Barry is a volunteer representative in Marin for the California Legislative Council for Older Americans (a group based in San Francisco and now headed by former Mill Valley Methodist minister Edward Peet). She is working locally with Rosalie de Christopher, a younger Democrat whose Marin party is keeping an eye on the old folks.

What they're planning for next Wednesday, August 15, is a rally and picnic on the capital lawn in Sacramento. The reason pressure over there is vital is that two days later the Senate Finance Committee will be considering two bills — AB 18 (Burton) and SB 110 (Moscone) — that will supplement the Nixon plan.

It's important that there be a show of concern for the bills next Wednesday. It would be nice, says Clemmie, if those on hand weren't all aged people. In a time of crushing price rises (the rent paid by one elderly couple of my acquaintance has gone from $115 to $160 in the past two months) it seems civilized to consider the problem in

San Francisco Examiner. 6/13/78 - Marin Sonoma Edition

A place for a woman to turn if her husband has a stroke

By Mary Crawford

CLEMMIE BARRY, who lives in a small garden apartment in Kentfield, has started a disaster council of her own. And it is for one group alone, namely the wives of stroke victims.

Lacking a better name, she calls it the Marin Wives Support Group, and after almost a year is still looking for something more appropriate.

But the women who have joined her group, who resemble a group of bridge-playing little old ladies but aren't, call themselves "Clemmie's gang."

Clemmie is their leader. She and her husband Dick, who was once a sea captain, were born in 1901 and came to Marin County in 1946.

At one time or another, she was a social worker, teacher and real estate saleswoman.

They retired in the early 1950s and moved to Lassen County in 1957, both looking forward to a long and leisurely old age.

Three years later, disaster struck. Dick Barry suffered a stroke.

"Statistics show that when a wife has a stroke, she goes to a convalescent hospital and stays there," she says sadly.

"That's because men aren't able to cope with being a nurse, physiotherapist, cook and housekeeper.

"But after Dick was in the hospital about 10 days, his doctor told me: 'Take him home.'

"And I said: 'But doctor, how can I? He can't talk, walk or eat by himself. And he is incontinent.'

"And the doctor said: 'If you take him home to your loving care, he'll get well faster.'

"So I took him home. What else could I do.

"Every wife of a stroke victim goes through this.

"And I brought him back to life.

"And in about three weeks after he came home, I was able to get him up, and he could talk and he began to walk with the help of a four-legged metal walker."

That was in 1960. Then late last spring he had a second stroke; this one worse than the first one. He has been in a convalescent hospital ever since.

Clemmie Barry says the brain damage suffered in this stroke is what makes caring for her husband so difficult. She brings him home for holidays, such as last Easter.

But for 17 long years she handled the heart-breaking, back-breaking job of taking care of her husband by herself.

"Without respite," she says.

"There was such a need for respite during those 17 years. For me to be free so I could have some time alone and also need for day services so somebody could come in and help when I had him at home."

When he was in the hospital, she met wives of other stroke victims and found they also had a desperate need for help.

So last July, with her giving the big push, the Marin Senior Day Services for stroke victims and other frail and elderly persons

—See Page 4, Col. 1

A place a woman can turn if her husband has a stroke

—From Page 1

opened in a hall of the First Presbyterian Church in San Anselmo.

Two public health nurses are provided, with their salaries paid with federal money.

And about 60 persons a week get help at the center, which is open Tuesday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Lunch is served and activities include an hour of exercise, current events, an art class and entertainment.

Heere's what Helen Reali, 62, of San Anselmo, says about Clemmie's gang:

"My husband, Emile, is 74. We both life at home in San Anselmo. He sold industrial hardware, like power tools.

"We have two grown sons, and Emile retired in 1969, with great expectations.

"In April 1970 he had his first stroke.

"And for eight years I have taken care of him with the help of my dear sister-in-law, who works.

"Emile doesn't talk at all, not at all. He is paralyzed on the right side."

Last summer she heard about Clemmie Barry's respite group, and has been bringing him to the church hall on Fridays and leaving him there while she shops and does whatever is necessary on her "day off."

"Clemmie started this family support group. For a long time she had been trying to get help and support for the wives of stroke victims because there are dozens of people in Marin who are fighting this problem alone.

"I have the total physical care of my husband, lifting him from the bed to the wheelchair, into and out of the car, and putting the wheelchair in the trunk.

"Then there's the emotional part, to have lived with someone who was very active, happy and busy.

"And suddenly he becomes so totally handicapped. Can't say a word. Can't communicate in any way. Can't even read. Can't write. Sometimes he can communicate with his eyes.

"The first time I brought him there, he came very reluctantly, and I amost decided not to bring him back.

"But I brought him back.

"The volunteers are so marvelous with him and with the other hendicapped.

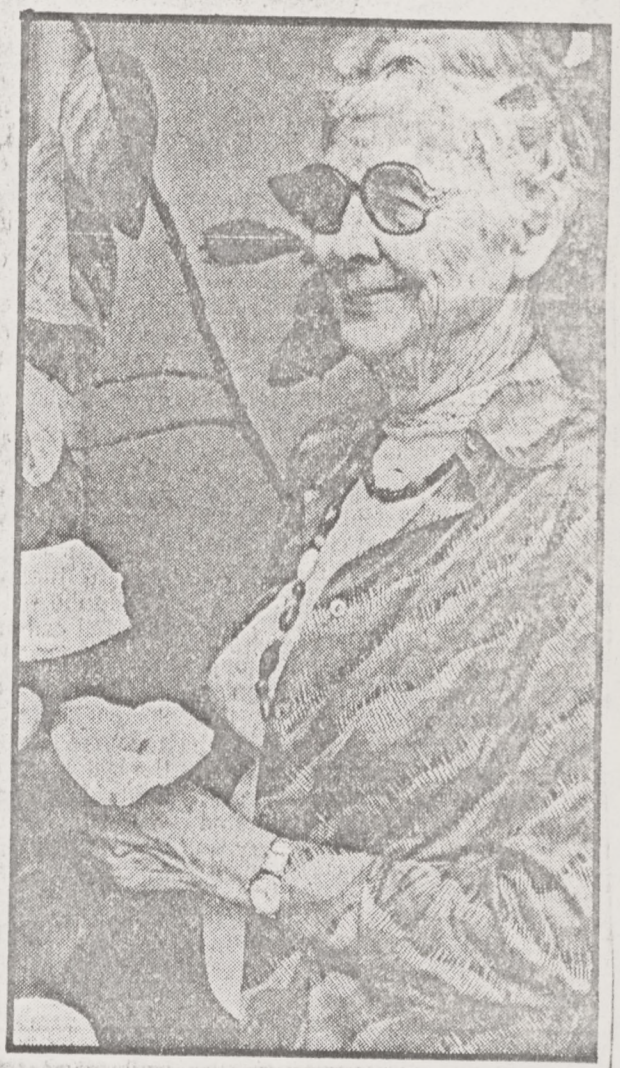
"The program is so stimulating to him, I don't think we have missed a week since we started coming."

Magdalen McDevitt, 77, of Corte Madera, sitting at the lunch table across from Reali, picked up the conversation:

"George is 78. He had his stroke almost 10 years ago. He was a plumbing contractor until then.

"Now he can't use his right hand and he can't talk.

"And for almost a year we have been coming here on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Before that I handled the problem alone, just like Helen. And am I thankful for those three days!"



Examiner/Walt Lynott

Marinite Clemmie Barry: 'Every wife of a stroke victim goes through this'

Examiner / Walt Lynott

Supporters all: Helen and Emile Reali, left; Clemmie Barry, center; Magdalen and George McDevitt

INDEPENDENT JOURNAL SAN RAFAEL 2/28.78

On growing old

'He never came home'

By Jack Lind

Dick Barry was a sailing man. He had a master's license, and he could sail any vessel of any tonnage on any ocean. He was also an artist and a sculptor. He carved beautiful figures in hardwood he picked up in the Pacific.

In 1960, at the age of 59, Dick Barry had a massive stroke. "I watched him have it," his wife, Clemmie, recalled recently. "They took him off to the hospital. A stroke is very much like death, because he never came home. They brought home this body that couldn't talk and couldn't walk and couldn't eat . . ."

Clemmie Barry, like so many other women whose husbands have suffered strokes, took on the responsibility for Dick Barry.

"I realized that I was suddenly responsible for two lives instead of one. It finally got to me at the end of 10 years. I was really in very bad shape and during that 10 years no one ever allowed me to tell them how hard it was.

"There was no respite care when I was looking for it. I carried this grief for these 10 years. I don't think I ever cried. Then finally, I remember this one friend who said, 'Tell me how it is.' and I started crying and that was the release that kept me going. By being able to share the emotional hurt and distress I was able to handle it."

For a while, Clemmie Barry and her husband lived on the money they got from the sale of their home. Eventually, their resources were drained and Social Security was inadequate. There was no money for anybody to come in and help care for Dick Barry.

In 1977, Barry had another small stroke, and it was decided that he would be better off in a convalescent home.

Clemmie Barry, now 77, had taken care of her helpless husband for 17 years. Now, she visits him frequently at the home.

"He likes me to read poetry to him. He particularly likes one poem called 'Evolution'. There is death and there is rebirth in every stage of evolution and so we kind of think that maybe in this state of our lives we may have a rebirth of some kind."

When she can, she takes her husband for rides. They like to drive to the lagoon by the Civic Center and feed the geese and the ducks.

Today, Clemmie Barry is philosophical about their lives.

"It seems we sort of represent two of the realities of aging. My mind is better than it has ever been, and I feel wonderfully healthy. I represent one reality and he represents a reality that happens to many, many people."

Clemmie Barry is now trying to get together with other women who have suffered fates similar to hers. She wants to try to create a supportive environment in which the women carrying for husbands who have suffered strokes can turn to their sisters for comfort and understanding.

She thinks it is just too overwhelming for any human being to carry one's grief inside, without being able to open up to another person, to cry and to touch.

She would like to hear from anybody in a similar situation who feels she needs emotional support. She can be reached through the Marin Area Agency on Aging at the Civic Center.

An interview with Clemmie Barry made by Marin Community Video will be shown at 10:15 p.m. March 8 on Cable TV Channel 11.

(Jack Lind is a staff member of the Marin Area Agency on Aging.)

Labor Women Series
California Historical Society

Interview with Clemmie Barry
Date of Interview: October 6, 1975

Interviewer: Lucy Kendall
Transcriber: Lucy Kendall

Begin: First Interview

Ken: This is an interview conducted at the home of Mrs. Barry, a three room apartment in Kentfield California. The Interviewer is Lucy Kendall representing the California Historical Society Library.

Bar: My suggestion there would be, the home of Clemmie Barry. I haven't been Mrs. Barry for so long. I am Ms. Barry. [laughs]

Ken: We'll just leave that in as a correction then.

Ken: All right Ms. Barry. Let's start out with your childhood. What we want to do is to find out what the life of a woman during your childhood was like, and during your growing up. So let's start out where you were born, who your mother and father were, what your relationship with them was.

Bar: I always say that my memory is like a tape, that I remember all the way back - probably even pre-natal. My birth is sort of an interesting thing. I've often said that the way I was born had a lot to do with the way I am.

But first I would say that I was the sixth of eight children, and we lived on a farm.

My father was born in Indiana and his father back then (that would be more than a hundred and fifty years ago) committed suicide. An old Indiana farmer - which seems amazing to me. So dad was out on his own when he was thirteen. And his mother had died previously. So he became the hired hand for Grandpa Hill in Illinois. Then he met my mother.

Then Grandpa Hill sold all his land in Illinois. And in 1888 he brought all his kids to Nebraska.

Bar: He was able to buy a hundred and sixty acres for all of his kids from the money he got from the Illinois land. It was good land, but it was really pretty wild country yet.

So mom and dad lived in what was called Fodder Ridge. There weren't very many hills around there (I mean landscaped ones topography wise). So they lived on this little windy hill. Of course there was no irrigation or anything. Some years there were crops, and some years there weren't. It was a very, very hard life for them.

Anyway, I was born on August 24th, 1901. And all the other kids had gone to town to the circus. I guess they went with some neighbor bedause my mother was so pregnant with me that she couldn't go. We had no telephone, so dad was on his way across the prarieland (I can still see that pasture that he was walking across) over a mile to a neighbor to call the doctor. And the old doctor would have had to come five miles with a horse and buggy. So I didn't wait. I got there before the doctor [laughter].

Then my mother's sister, it seems, came along somewhere along the line. Anyway, I've always had this feeling that then I couldn't wait and I've never been able to wait since, always in a hurry, always anticipating. I ~~am~~ always anticipate. I am always ahead of things. If I am going to turn a corner three miles down the highway, I get in the other lane. Anyway, that's how I was born on this farm.

You know it's strange. All my memories are happy memories. And I remember one Christmas (I don't know how old I was) that there was no money for Christmas presents. And dad made us all dolls out of just a piece of wood with tacks for eyes. And I think my mother unravelled a little

Bar: hemp rope for the hair. We called it binding twine. It was for binding the wheat during the summer. And then I remember a Christmas when I had a doll and it's eyes closed. But it was a very beautiful china doll. And for years I had just the head of one that had a beautiful white face with black hair.

Let me think back. That place, being the sixth, with five older brothers and sisters I was in a very good spot. I got a lot of attention, and I was very cute. What child isn't? And I know that I really felt very safe and secure. Even though we didn't have anything fancy to eat, we grew our own food. We had a paper bag full of pointy chocolate caramels on Saturdays when dad took the produce in. That was a great treat.

That's sort of an interesting kind of thing. My mother made beautiful butter, and she had a pound mold that had acorns on top. It was beautiful butter. And everybody wanted some of Mrs. Shuck's butter. We had pounds of that which we bartered at the grocery store, with the eggs, for the staples that we needed like sugar and flour and that sort of thing. We canned all the vegetables that we had, and we canned fruit.

When I was three years old I have a picture of me and the other kids standing in front of this peach orchard. When I was older it had dried out with some drought that killed it.

Then the twins came along. When I was three the twins were born. And I don't remember that my nose was out of joint.

The first I remember in my memory of life was this old lady. Although the doctor got there, there was sort of a midwife. So I remember old Mrs. Olchier sitting in front

Alkire

Bar: of the kitchen range. The oven door was open. And she had something in her lap. There had been excitement around because all the births were at home. I remember kind of peering into her lap, and I saw this little bundle of whatever it was. I don't know whether it upset me or not. I think I probably was very glad about it except later when we were playing together. We were never three together. One of them would be with me against the other one. There was always two against one. They might be against me, or one with me against the other. I don't know what that represents. I suppose there's some psychological explanation.

Ken: By the way, you were telling me about your father. What about your mother?

Bar: Dad was six feet two, and mother was five feet one. By the way, Grandpa Hill was State Senator from our place. When I think of that sweet woman! My mother had little more of a cultural background. She had learned to play the organ. She had some very nice qualities, but here she was <u>stuck</u> out there on that farm - and one kid right after another. And there the labor is divided. The wife not only does all the cooking and the dishwashing and the cleaning of the house and the washing and ironing. In those days - my god - the ironing we used to do. We didn't know anything about drip dry. And in the summer -

And then she raised the chickens. The chickens were her province. And looking up eggs was always such fun. We would go out and find the eggs and bring them in. That was really neat. And another thing about chickens-I have one of the nicest memories. I was reminded of it because I had a dream about it not long ago. I had a very good dream. I dreamed about little

Bar: chickens that were making the noise that little chickens do when they are warm. We used to have kind of flash rainstorms. There would be some old mother hen with maybe fifteen chicks, and when it started to rain she would squat down to hover so they could get under her. But sometimes she would squat down in a hollow place that would fill up with water. Then we kids would dash out with our bare legs and bare feet and get these littl chickens who were drowning and bring them in by this same oven door. We would put them in boxes and blankets until they dried off and were warm, and they made this little noise --peeeee - kind of happy little noise. That's a very pleasant memory. We loved to go out in the rain.

Ken: Let me get back to your mother. Did she go back as far as your father's family? Sh

Bar: She was born in Illinois. Her family was English. Now dad was Irish. His mother's maiden name was K E R R. And then Shuck - I had a spell once of trying to find out what my ancestors were. My mother always discouraged it. She said, "You'll find some one hanging on a tree somewhere - a horse thief, or something like that." The Shucks were the Hessian soldiers who came during the Revolution and settled in Pennsylvania. There are a lot of Schucks or Shooks. We just don't know. It's really kind of sad that you don't know. Dad looked very Irish, although he wasn't as funny as Irish people are.

Then my mother - her mother was French. Grandpa Hill was English. I think I talk about Grandpa Hill. I never knew him, but we had crayon portraits (these great big black and white things) one of Grandpa Shuck and one of Grandpa Hill in the fanciest frames. But

Bar: Grandpa Hill had this big white beard, and he was a very, very handsome man.

Mother at least had finished grammar school, I think, but dad had very little schooling. You know he read the newspaper. We got the St. Jo, Missouri newspaper because the railroad ran through our little town and the paper could be delivered by the rural delivery the next day. And I could always remember him sitting and reading by the little kerosene lamp at night, and us kids raising hell because we all were in the same room. And he would have to shush us. Also I can see dad sitting there under that little kerosene light, and he used to sing to us. I'll cry if I think about this because he used to sing My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean and a lot of the folk songs that the kids sing now. He had a nice tenor voice.

It seems I talk more of dad and I have more memories of him because I think of mother working so hard. And I didn't finish. The chickens were her province, and then the garden in the summer. And god, how she used to have to work to get us kids to do any hoeing or weeding. I know I never liked it.

Another thing that was very funny as I look back now - we raised carrots like you never saw, and we didn't know what they were. We fed them to the hogs for years before we learned that they were edible. They apparently found the seeds in the store, but mom didn't know how to cook them. We had parsnips and turnips, but we didn't know what to do with carrots. I can remember my first day of school. I think we can skip five years now.

I was six, and I just <u>died</u> with having my older brothers and sisters going to school. It was an old white one room school. And I went

Bar: back and taught there two years. This is so vivid in my memory, and I have told it many times gecause it was so terrific an emotional hurt I got that day because I was so eager to go to school. I remember dad picked me up and said, "My little girl is old enough to go to school." His little girl was just bursting, and she had her new dinner bucket. We didn't have lunch pails. We had dinner buckets, and they were little round things with a handle. Of course in the Fall we always had fried chicken for our lunch. So my brother, who was five years older than I, and I went to school. We walked these two miles, but we went kitty-cornered. And there was this one pasture that was still wild buffalo grass. The plow had never spoiled it. You know how they pushed the frontiers back and destroyed all the native grasses. But this one pasture was about forty acres, and in the spring the wild flowers that you didn't see anywhere else were there.

So we got to school. The teachers in those days were just like I was. They were out of high school. They had no training. This day, because I was a beginner, the teacher gave us huge big leaves. They were cotton wood leaves, just like poplar. We were to draw around them and color them green, abd you know how creative that is. Anyway, that was our assignment. But apparently I had a little problem with my left eye. It never looked funny but I didn't see right. Anyway, my leaf didn't get on the paper. About a third of it was on the desk. Of course I was just sick because I knew I had done something wrong. You know how a child wants to have approval. I remember my teacher held my leaf up as a bad leaf because it wasn't

Bar: done right. I don't know how children survive that kind of experience. But I was such a smart little thing I wasn't about to go home with this bad leaf because they were waiting for me at home to see how smart I was. So I stole another little girls's [laughter] leaf. It was a perfect one and apparently she hadn't signed it. I don't know how I got away from my brother, but I walked those two miles home with that hot leaf in my hand and got home before he did. Well I was just being praised all over the place, and they were so pleased with me. Then Elmer came home and he had been in the midst of all this ruckus. His little sister had not only done a bad leaf, but she stole one, And he told the truth. I don't remember, but I am sure I was spanked - not because I had done a bad leaf, but because I had lied and stolen, and my father would never go for that. So that was my first day of school. Yet I still loved school, but that was a hurt that to this day I can measure how awful that was, being a failure, anticipating so much and in one day doing so many things wrong.

I went to that little country school with those fummy teachers for eight years. At that time I think I was thirteen. That was in nineteen fourteen. When you finished the eighth grade you had to take a countywide examination in order to be eligible to go to high school. And I remember the day I got this post card through the mail that said I had passed.

I think my mother was less emotional about things and dad and I were more alike. I dashed out to find dad to show it to him. So he said, "Well, that's nice. What do you want to go to high school for?" And I said, I wanted to be a teacher. Teacher was the only thing I knew. There were no professions for women in those days. And I remember saying I could stay at grandmas and

Bar: I could drive old Doll or old Flo. We had a Model T by that time, but I don't even think I thought I might drive that. Anyway he said, "I don't know why you want to go to school. You'll just get married. What do you need to have an education for if you are going to get married. " But I remember the little thing of the card and the excitement of it.

And my high school days - I don't think of them with any kind of excitement. I don't know why them seem negative to me because I was a fair enough student. But I nad never learned to study. I think that was it. We learned things by rote. You learned your grammar. You diagramed sentences. And I could get a hundred every time. I could do that perfectly, but I didn't understand why. And we still said cheer at home instead of chair.

We had one teacher and she was also the principal. She waa the basketball coach and that's where I really could shine because I was so tall. I was the Wilt Chamberlain of the high school. No one had a chance against me. And I was fast. I just ran like lightening.

I just did the conventional things. I remember I took home economics. I wanted to take typing. They had just put typing in. But that cost ten dollars, and I could take home economics (we called it demestic science) and it didn't cost so much. Anyway, I never took the typing. I probably wouldn't have made it anyway, and I never would have learned shorthand. I didn't have that kind of a head. Or at least I didn't think I did. I remember making a dress that was so horrible I couldn't wear it. I didn't even know how to hold a needle.

And that was another thing. During World War I my brother who was old enough (he was five years older) was gone. I remember helping

Bar: dad. I worked on the farm - anything from shocking wheat to cultivating corn. And the corn cultivating was really fun because you had these old cultivators - they called them badgers. I just loved to be with the horses, and I could harness the horses with their great big collars.

I had a dog too that they got when I was nine months old. Old Carlo was my dog. He was kind of a shepherdy type, long brown hair and rings around his eyes, and a white chest. He was the kind when you said, "Go get the cows, Carlo," no matter if they were way down the end of the pasture he would drive them home very carefully - at their heels. We sheared him in the summer because he got so hot. And he had a tan undercoat. And when he went down to get the cows that time, they didn't know him and he came up the lane lickety-cut with the cows all chasing him. And he was so embarrassed. He died when I was in high school driving back and forth in an oldhorse and buggy. I saw him that morning when I left. He was old - fifteen years old. When I came home that night he wasn't there. And nobody said anything. And there again, I think the thing that is so good now is that at least we are able to let our grief out. Now I must have been grief stricken because I loved this old dog, yet I don't remember any mention of letting me feel sorry, or to cry. We never cried about things. We held in our emotions. I guess we kids would cry. Probably we cried when we got hurt, or mad, but I don't remember crying out of grief. I remember seeing the family cry when I was about eight. We would rent threshers, and my sister had come home to help. She was very pregnant. She had helped move tables or something.

Bar: Anyway the baby was a little premature and he had a cleft palate and a hair lip. I remember it was the first grandchild. (I wasn't allowed in the house). I remember we kids were just dying to have a drink of water or some excuse. And we heard her screaming. I remember the people came out of the house crying. Now he is sixty five.

Ken: When you had these eight brothers and sisters, was your family enough or did you have friends?

Bar: I had a very special girl friend. Her name was Vera. She didn't go to the same school I did. That was when we were younger kids. I don't remember girls so much, but I remember this one boy that was my boyfriend when I was little. My oldest brother was going with his sister. That gave us a link. I must have been about twelve or thirteen. It was my last year, probably, in this grade school, and oh did I have a crush on this boy!

That's another thing. I was so scared of boys. Lot of kids start their sex life early, but I didn't [laughs]. I never got involved with any sexual things. I missed a lot.

Ken: When did you first learn about sex? Did your mother tell you?

Bar: I don't really know. We were on the farm. The old roosters were after the old hens. I do remember once in a while some neighbor would come over. We had a bull, and the neighbor would bring a cow to be bred. We kids were supposed to stay in the house. I remember when our old cat had kittens we weren't supposed to be around. Sex and birth were something the children shouldn't know about or share in. It was very backward. It's funny that this denial of amy kind of understanding of sex - yet apparently I learned something of how babies got there because I

Bar: never had intercourse with any of the young boys I went with. I didn't have a date until I was sixteen. Then the first blind date I ever had was with this older guy and we went out in a car and parked somewhere. Everybody was necking, and I had never been kissed like that before. I really liked it. This is interesting because he is the one,as we would say now, who really turned me on. We were going to be married. He was in World War I, and he was stationed in Germany for a long time after the war. I remember he brought me home this beautiful ring. Of course I just would swoon everytime I was around him because I wanted to have intercourse so much. But I knew a lot of girls who got pregnant, and that was a disgrace that you got pregnant. So then I went away to summer school. When I came back he had gone back to an older woman that he knew - a widow. As I say, he was about eight years older than I was and the family weren't too approving of him. Oh god, he was handsome! And he was very sexy. You know he was very good about me too. There are some very tough men who won't take advantage of a virgin.

I dreamed erotic dreams about this guy for fifty years. That first biologic urge is so important that it be fulfilled because there was something so lacking there. I dreamed about him for fifty years until he died, And when he died I quit dreaming about him.

He came to visit me when I was a playground teacher in Denver while I was at the University. He and this women were divorced. He came and spent that afternoon with me, and then he went away. And I think now, why in the hell did I let him get away. I was older when I was in college and I had no dates at all there.

Bar: And I still wonder why I didn't. This was a neighborhood where there were all races and colors. And I had all these little foreign kids. That's just an incident.

So I was a virgin until I was twenty-six.

Ken: Oh, Clemmie!

Bar: Right. Think of all I missed. And I wasn't much of a masturbater either. And I really liked men.

Then this White Russian I met in College was in the Colorado School of Mines.

Ken: Let's go back to your church life. You were talking about that.

Bar: [referring to outline] Back here - dreams of the future. You know, I always fantasized what I wanted to do and be, and it always seemed that it happened.

My first fantasy about a job that I wanted was - we had the Chataqua. Now here's another whole story. Chataqua, New York, was a place where they had cultural activities. Then they sent out people all over the country into these little towns. They would set up a tent. We had people who sang opera. And we had people who made real lurid speeches. We had plays. And it was the only cultural thing that happened. That was in the summertime. They would come for a week or ten days. And it was really a big excitement. And they always had a woman who took care of the children who came. A day care center - or what. And I had an idea of what I wanted to do. I wanted to be the playground teacher for a Chataqua. Well, I didn't get to the Chataqua, but I did become a playground teacher in Denver. I worked under the Recreation Department.

And I was religious. I got converted every winter. We had revival meetings - some Evangalist preacher like Billy Graham. Of cousse, they

Bar: weren't as high-powered. My father wasn't saved for a long time.

Ken: Your family didn't go to a church then?

Bar: My mother was very religious. We all went to Sunday School; to the Methodist church in this little town.

Finally, at one of these Evangalist meetings, my father got saved. And it was really good because he got angry a lot. He became frustrated. The life of a farmer is really hard. So he became much more gentle and easier to be with.

I started teaching a Sunday School class when I was not much bigger than the kids I was teaching.

I was terribly religious, and that's how I broke away. One summer I went to an Epworth League Conference at Estes Park, and that's how I got off to the University of Denver. I met. I met someone there who helped me get a scholarship.

So I got a Methodist Scholarship, and I was going to be a Deaconess. In those days the Methodist Deaconesses wore little black hats and little uniforms.

It was the beginning of religious education after school in churches - and also recreation. We had a basketball team, and I was coach for the team. Bishop Tippett, who is now in Berkeley, was the young minister that I had met in Estes Park. This was nineteen twenty three. And he arranged for me to get this scholarship to work in his church. Then I baby sat for them. And that's how I got my dinner. I helped her, not so much with the dinner, but I cleaned up and washed the dishes afterwards. They used to come home and I would be with their first baby. I would be sitting there asleep in the rocking chair with the kid asleep in my arms because I

Bar: was tired. I was going to school. This was the University of Denver

Ken: Did the family raise hell about your leaving home?

Bar: Oh, no. They were very good about it, but they didn't give me any money. I started off - It's funny, I had been teaching, and I always bought good clothes. I got seventy dollars a month when I was teaching. I taught four years in the little one room school, and then I taught one year in the kindergarten in the town school. That was the summer I went off to Estes Park.

There was always this kind of openness. I was always out front. It's interesting, as I look back I realize there was a continuity in my life that was really kind of nice. I'm glad I had it.

Ken: Are you the only one of your family that went to college?

Bar: Right. I was the only one that finished high school. The older ones didn't. I remember my one brother wanted to go to high school. He started, but he had to go home and help dad with the chores. He couldn't stay and play football, and if he couldn't stay and play football he didn't want to go to school. There were very few people from my town that went to college. And this was nineteen twenty three. College was very common for everybody then, but not in that area.

You know when I was trying to do some stories for autobiography [referring to a course she had taken at Emeritus College in Marin] I found that I had what I call my mud-pie stage. That place up until I was thirteen. I have such good memories of all the things that happened to me there, and those are the ones I like to stay with. In high school, I don't remember anything

Bar: that was fun.

Ken: Did you have any social life?

Bar: Well, the social life on the farm was that you exchanged dinners with other farmers like Vera's family. Her mother was a Swede, and most Swedes are very good cooks. Maybe she was a good cook, but she cooked differently than we did. And we would have Sunday dinner with them, and they would have Sunday dinner with us. And I remember we never thought Sadie's cooking was as good as our mothers.

And then in the Summer we had what was called The Harvest Home Picnic. There was a beautiful grove of trees where we went, and there were booths like a County Fair.

And then we went to County Fairs. This is kind of an apocryphal story. I don't remember it, but they said I loved bananas. And bananas were kind of scarce. So I had eight cents and I went up to this man who was selling bananas and I said "I want eight cents worth of bananas." I spent my all on bananas. The fair was sixteen miles away, and you know I was sixteen years old before I was out of this County. My travels were that limited.

The County Fair was always a big excitement. Mother made fried chicken and packed lunch, and we drove a team of horses with the old carriage. It wasn't a surrey with a fringe. It was just and old two-seated carriage.

By the time I was older my older brothers and sisters were married, and they came home for Sunday dinner too.

And there were church socials.

In the high school I was in plays. I sound as if I were very outgoing. Yet inside I was very shakey in many ways - never quite good enough. And that was the kind of trip that was

Bar: laid on farm people. The people in town, the bankers and all the people who wear white collars, they always seemed a little better. And they did have a little more education.

I remember when this little old woman (she was my age now, seventy five years old) was still teaching because there was no retirement. And here she was in this little town, in this little school. She must have been very lonely. She was such a cultured woman in the best sense of the word. She taught us Shakespeare and she taught us music. So we were going to put on this little operetta - The Farmers Daughter. I wasn't the lead, but I was next. I was tickled spitless to be asked. I could sing all right, and I was pretending I couldn't do this. And by golly, two days before the performance I lost my voice completely. I am sure it was psychomatic. And we had an old osteopath and he gave me treatments and I gargled and nothing helped until the night of the performance. I had no understudy, so the night of the performance I had to get up. And little Miss Mann (this kind of proves validating people can make them do what they need to do) was standing on the side. And she said, "You can do it", or something like that. And all of a sudden I was singing over the hoarsness, and I sang it all. Her faith in me, I guess, made me be able to do it because I'm sure it was just fear.

Ken: Did you do any reading while you were in school?

Bar: I was a good reader. I could stand up. We had Baldwin's Reader from the first through the eighth grade. But from a literary point of view our lives were very, very impoverished.

Bar: In this country school where I was we had rows and rows of Alger books, Horatio Alger's success stories. And then I think there were some books for boys. And you know there was one book there that was a big book, and I never read it until I went back to teach in that school. And it was David Copperfield, and it was a big thick book. And I used to stay after school to read it because I was fascinated with it. And I suppose that in high school I had read enough. Like we did read Shakespeare with Miss Mann. At home we had no library. I have a book that my sister sent me a while back that my brother gave me in nineteen nine. I was eight years old. It was a girls book, one of those like the Alger books. And we had a few of that type. Not like Dick's family who were very literate. Literary people too. And we just weren't. So there was a big gap. If you don't read things you don't have any place of reference. There is so much you refer back to. So when I went to the college here I went to every English Lit. class that they had.

When I went to college I had a lot of Modern Lit. But somehow it didn't register. It was just something I had to take to get through. I was working all the time and I just read what I had to read.

You have a note here about my first job. It was this teaching job in these country schools.

Ken: I mean. Did you have your first job when you were in college, or was it after college?

Bar: Oh no. It was before. You see I finished high school. Then you could go to summer school. I went down to Peru State Normal school, Peru, Nebraska, down on the Platte River. Then I went one year to

Bar: Greeley State Normal School. Somehow I kind of kept wandering afield. But, as I said, I taught four years in those country schools and one year in Kindergarten. And that was all before I went to college.

The teachers never called me by my first name. In those days you were more inclined to call people Miss, I guess. I was Miss Shuck to all the teachers because I was four years older than the average freshman. And I was scared, and I'm sure I had this old thing of not feeling quite good enough, but I put on a front that scared everybody because I was so big.

And I was not invited to join a sorority until my junior year when I didn't need it. I wouldn't have had the money anyway. The sorority thing was a great thing on our campus.

Ken: Who were your friends, then?

Bar: I had this one friend. She was sort of a maverick like me. I went to visit her five years ago. She was something in the graduate school for years there at the university. But she and I used to - we were inseperable. She was from Missouri. We belonged to the Cosmopolitan club. But mainly my social life was around the churches where I worked. But the Cosmopolitan Club was where we met men. And the Colorado School of Mines was full of foreign students. This is 1923,24 and 25. The Russians who had escaped from the Bolsheviks came to this country in 1921 and 1922. And there was a big fund raised by American business men to put these young Russians through technical schools like the Colorado School of Mines, which was an engineering school. Then they were to go back to Russia and take over when the revolution failed. They were very hopeful. I think they were allowed five thousand dollars for their four years of

Bar: school. Many of them had their tongue in their cheek. Of course I just loved all of them, and they loved me. I remember one time we went out on a week end. I was still a naive little girl and we had gone on this week end. The Dean of Women called me in. We had no chaperones. A few men from the D.U. campus belonged, and this bunch of foreigners went for week ends. God, when I think what I missed. [laughter] Nowadays you'd really make use of that. Anyway, when I came back the Dean of Women called me in and she said, "Miss Shuck you wouldn't marry a Chinaman would you?" And I said, "If I found one tall enough I might." That was always my criterion. I was so tall.

Ken: Did you graduate from college?

Bar: Yes. I ~~got~~ did in 1927. It was the hardest thing. It was so hard. I never had any money and I worked at what they called the Epworth Mission. They were recreation places. Then the Northside Community Center was a Methodist Mission, actually, in the Italian Community. And that always bothered me because the young girls that I was dealing with there -Oh, I had worked for the Y and the Girl Reserves, the Campfire Girls - I had been a leader of all those. It was my size partly, I think, and then I had a very outgoing personality. I always got put into places of leadership. You may recall I was put into places of leadership when I was not up to it at all.

Ken: You just thought you weren't.

Bar: That's part of it. Anyway, at this Mission would come to the club. We had clubs and noonday luncheons and we sewed. It wasn't the educational program that I later did when I was with the Y.W.C.A. I remember the big Catholic Church there was the center of their life. Even fifty

Bar: years ago there was a lot more strictness in the church. And I remember one time going to church with the girls. I had never been in a Catholic church and somebody kneeled in the pew in front of me and I damn near fell over him going on my long legs [laughter].

I really kept my nose to the grindstone. When I think back, I was so tired. I lived over on the north side and the university was at the other end of town and I had to take the old street car. And that's how a lot of the young men who went to the university earned their way, being conductors on these old street cars. I would have to get up and ride an hour to get to my eight o'clock class. And I'd get home late. I always had to have a bath because I was usually doing some kind of recreational work. Then I'd think, well I'll get in bed and then I'll study. You know when you get a bath and get in bed at that age, you just fall asleep. I don't know how I got any studying done.

Then the beautiful thing that I looked forward to every morning was riding across time and having breakfast on campus. I was living in a rooming house and I didn't get any meals there. I remember having breakfast on campus with a French professor. And he was a lecherous old stink. And he just loved me, and I was too naive to do anything about it. I remember having whole wheat toast and coffee and grapefruit, and sometimes an egg. I guess I had a little spending money to buy a meal once in a while.

Then I had meals at different homes. I met this one family through the church. Their daughter was out at Mills. They were very well-

Bar: to-do people. I didn't have to do anything. I just went there and ate. She was Swedish, and what a cook! These beautiful meals that I got for free, just because I was. [laughs] just for being. I remember when Genevieve came home - I had always wanted to go to a girls college. Where I knew about a girls college, I don't know, but I always thought of Eastern schools like Vasser or Smith and so on. And I don't know how I knew those things, isolated as we were.

Speaking of isolation, I need to tell this because my father, when tramps or hobos or just people on the bum stopped at our house, was so delighted to see them. They brought news of the outside world. They always stayed for supper. We had a spare bedroom. As I got older I remember they added to the house. They slept in the best bed in the house. Dad voted for [Eugene] Debs in 1920. And I often wonder how did he know? How did those old farmers know? And it must have been word of mouth that got around. It kind of touches me. It's kind of warming when I think of the isolation of those people and yet how some kinds of information did get around.

Ken: When you graduated, what happened?

Bar: Do you know, I had hardly remembered until my sister reminded me. By this time I was sleeping with Ivan. I shared an apartment with another girl and she and her boy friend would leave for the week end and leave the apartment to Ivan and me. We had a terrific physical attraction. In later years I realized that our sex life wasn't that good. So I was involved with him. When I took him home, that was really something. But on graduation my mother and the twins drove this old Model T Ford

Bar: five hundred miles. And in those days five hundred miles was a long way to drive a Model T Ford that maybe didn't go more than thirty miles an hour. They drove all the way from Nebraska to Denver to be at my graduation. I was so excited and involved. I had a cousin that they were able to stay with. I must not have seen them much. I don't know, but it just really touches me when I think of my mother and those two girls making that trip so they could see me graduate.

This goes back a little, but the kind of people my parents were - they were devoted to their kids. You know, we talk about, did you have love in your home life. I don't know if you could define it as love, but there must have been a lot of caring. They took good care of us and they did the best they could by us.

When I was eight, that must be the age when you first become aware of the whole world. I have a little thing I wrote about when we were kids we would whirl about. We would whirl until we got drunk, and the barn and everything was sailing over our heads, and then you would fall down. Somehow, in that whirling time it was completely flat. You could see as far as the eye could see to the horizon anywhere you looked. And I thought I lived in the center of the world because the sky came down on all sides even. I'm sure that was about this eight year old time.

Then they bought a piano. They must have had a good crop that year. There were six daughters - six girls and two boys. I remember when people had piano players, dad said he raised his piano players. I remember when

Bar: they brougt it home. Then my older sister went into town on Saturday to take music lessons. Mother could play. She played hymns. We used to stand around the piano and sing hymns. Then we girls got to play what we called sheet music. My first piece of sheet music was"It's a Long Way to Tipparree", then "On the Way to Mandalay", and then a bunch of World War I songs. I get real sentimental about that. Then my sister went to town to take lessons. She was going to learn to play the piano. When she came home I was just there all eyes and all agog, and my god, she couldn't play and she had had one lesson! I was disappointed. But I remember the piano, and that was really a big thing.

There again, we may not have had books, but pa and ma were really trying to get us something beyond just the hard role that they lived.

Ken: We were talking about your graduating from college, but I didn't know about Ivan. How did this come about?

Bar: Well, this woman who was my close pal was named Buelah. Then we had a friend named Til. Til was going with a white Russian. I think he came to this country even before the revolution. He had come here to buy supplies for Russia during World War I. They changed his name, but it was Mike Meehan of all things. The last I knew of them, they went back to live in Poland. Anyway, there was a family of old Nineteen Fivers, you know, peasant Russians who lived between Denver and Golden on kind of a farm. Their name was Lazar. They had parties. They loved to have their countrymen there. They had these fabulous parties on holidays. So Til and Mike invited Buelah and me to an Easter Party. And Til told us that they drank vodka. Now I had never tasted liquor. I grew up where maybe there

Bar: was a little medicinal whiskey in the house, but we just didn't drink. She said, "If they offer you a drink, you have to have it. You have to take it or it will hurt their feelings." [laughs].

Here there would be all these Russian men. They were cultured guys. They were the most delightful men I ever met. Eugene Startsky, I really fell in love with him. I would have preferred him over Ivan. He was a little younger, and really kind of Polish, and Russian too. I went with him a while. But somehow I let him get away.

Buelah and I used to set out on the campus and wonder if we should go to this party or not. We were really scared because of these "foreigners". But we went and they had all the traditional things - that great tall cake made of Cottage cheese and whatever it is. And sure enough they had vodka. I remember they gave me some. It looked like water. I was really very funny and very cute and very pretty. I still remember the dress I had. It was a black dress, but it had a rose-colored collar with gold lurex in it, and the cuffs the same. And this rose color against my face, I must have been real cute.

So I had this vodka. Then I screamed for water. Instead of bringing me water (I didn't know the difference) they brought me more vodka, and it really got me drunk. Ivan and I were dancing, and that was the beginning. That's the way our romance started.

I hadn't had much lovigg from men either - just hugging and kissing. I hadn't had much of that the years I was in college. So this was my Junior year, I think - and I liked it. So that was the beginning of Ivan.Then when we were married we went back to New York. We were married in New York City down on Washington

Bar: Square. He was going to Columbia and I was working for the Y.W.C.A., and that's another story.

Ken: What was your relationship? Was it any different after marriage than it was before?

Bar: He was all Dostoevski's characters rolled into one. Oh, I met him, and then that summer he went out to work on some field trip like the engineers did. He was a metalurgical engineer. So we corresponded. He had come to this country - he was so Russian he wasn't going to learn English. [laughs]. And the Lazars, I remember those people. They warned me not to marry Ivan. He was such a depressed person. He was the kind of guy that when we were out he was opening doors and kissing women's hands, but at home he could be so sullen and really mean.

While he was still at Columbia I got a job at the Y out at Redding, Pennsylvania and he came out for week ends. Then he was out of a job. This was the beginning of the thirties. And he was sure it was his fault, like all the men in those days thought. The kind of thing he would do - I came home from the Y one day and I got dinner and had it on the table, and he said he had already eaten. He had gone out to a restaurant. I remember that kind of hurt. He was just impossible to live with. We were separated quite a little during that one year. Then I left him for one year, but we were still in the same town, and we got pulled back together - just the physical thing. I remember just crying and crying. You know this psychiatrist friend of mine said, "He's never going to get any better. He'll get worse as years go on." Then is when we got a divorce - in thirty four, I guess it was.

Ken: Then you actually were working right after school?

Bar: My first job after school was in Parkersburg, West Virginia as a Y.W.C.A. Secretary.

They had just opened what they called two huge viscose mills there. It was when they first invented rayon. And they had these two huge mills there where thousands of women from all over the countryside came in and worked there. So the Y had this program for what we called, "the industrial girls." They had a program for business girls and a program for industrial girls. Kind of a consciousness raising thing was really what it was. We had club programs and we had conferences. We called them conferences then. We call them workshops now. And the recreational things. I just stayed there. They were so delighted to get me, and I was really good.

But I was so in love with old Ivan. Then he came and went to New York to do graduate work at Columbia. Then I got a job at the New Utrecht branch of the Y in Brooklyn.

There was another fantasy I had. I fantasized that Ivan and I would get married. There was a placed called the Bear's Den that was under the auspices of the YMCA of New York University, We would have YW conferences all over in the summertime, and I met Frank Olmstead who was the secretary for the YMCA in New York. They had this placed called the Bear's Den, and it was in the old Gallatin Coffee House where George Washington used to eat, and it was right down on Washington Square. And this Bear's Den had red drapes and red carpeting and was like a lot of the pads today. And it had a bedroom and a kitchen. And downstairs where the restaurant was - the little booths were there.

Bar: And you know there were all those cute little Currier and Ive prints that I didn't have sense enough to steal! So I fantasized. I had seen it that summer. In 1928 I had gone up to the Y school and had seen the Bear's Den. So I fantasized that Ivan and I could live there and I could be hostess. I only worked half time at the Brooklyn Y. So I could be hostess and we would get married. And that's exactly what happened.

Gad, you know our bedroom was just a little hole in the wall and the trucks going down to the market in the morning came by so close they just shook this little place.

Then we had company. We knew a lot of Oriental students from the Colorado School of Mines and also from the International House in New York. I was sort of the den mother for a whole bunch of Oriental students.

I loved cats, and we had rats so big in that place. And the old stove was downstairs in this old restaurant kitchen. One time we were having company and I had a roast. I just had a little bitty gas stove upstairs, so I took this roast down to cook in this big old restaurant stove. And when I pulled it out of the oven a rat came flying off the top of the oven and hit the fat in the roast and went flying on by. I was so horrified, but what I did was - we took the roast out of the fat and served it, and I never told anybody that the rat had gone through the gravy.

Somebody from Brooklyn brought over two kittens, so I brought them home on the subway. One night I brought one home under my coat. I got both of them home. God, the rats were bigger than the kittens. Anyway, I got them home, and then one of them peed on my good pillow. And if

Bar: a cat pees on a pillow you might just as well throw it away. But I aired it and put it away. Later Yat Chu Pai was Ivan's friend, and he came to visit us. He is mentioned in Edgar Snow's Book, The Other Side of the River. They went back to China. I am sure they were Communists. They went back and we never heard of them again. But he came down from M.I.T. to visit Ed. So I made up their beds somewhere among the tables and I put a clean pillow case on this pillow for one of them and I don't know how I found this out. They were so proper they would never have said anything,but apparently they did. So one of them sleeping on this pillow with their hot head, it began to stink. I guess it was just one bed because they each thought it was the other one [laughter]. I guess I finally threw the pillow out, but I was very thrifty. I didn't have a lot of money.

And I worked at Macy's during that time too. I was a section manager at Macy's. I wore a white carnation. I think I got less than a dollar an hour. Then I got promoted to service representative for the Little Shop, and I was supposed to distinguish between the Westchester tweeds and the noveau rich that would come in because in the Little Shop the clerks brought the dresses to the ladies. Before I got that promotion I worked in $13.98 dresses. People would take home six or eight of them and would maybe bring all but one back, and you had to check them in. That was hard work. And of course the customer is always right no matter what they had done.

I would have to ride the subway home. Then we were living up at One hundred and fourteenth street.I would be so tired.

I know, I quit working at the Y and I went

Bar: to the Socialist school at night. Norman Thomas was speaking. And, you know, I didn't want to do night work because I wanted to be free to do things like that. Then I got this job a Macy's and I was so damn tired at night that I would just go home and fall into bed.

Ivan had some kind of a scholarship, but we didn't have much money. I always said if you live in New York and there are all these theatres, and you don't have enough money to enjoy them - but we did get to a few things, but not very much.

Our social life was still around the Russians. I remember one Russian from the Soviet Union came, and he lived with us. There was the Amtorg Trading Company was sort of the Consul or whatever, since we didn't recognize Russia. He thought that because I was an American, therefore I was a capitalist, and he wanted to fight me all the time. Ivan would translate what this guy had said to me and what I had said to him because we couldn't speak to each other. He was a funny little guy. I didn't like him. he was a real peasant [laughs], a cultured Russian.

Ken: When did you go back to the Y, then?

Bar: This would have been about nineteen thirty one or thirty two. I went out to Redding because they had the big hoisery mills there. We raised the consciousness <u>so well</u> of these girls that they had a big strike. God, there were these <u>thousands</u> of people on strike, and I was accused of starting it. It was ridiculous. Of course the Board women of the Y were wives of the employers.

The reason I left there was because the summer of the big strike the board wouldn't allow the strikers to go to the YWCA camp ~~and~~

Bar: because they might corrupt the other girls who were there. And this became a very hot issue. Of course I fought tooth and nail and some of the women did too. We finally won out, but they didn't like me any more.

Then this friend of mine who worked for the Gov. Pinchot Department of Labor in Harrisburg had been an organizer for the Amalgamated. And that's when I started to work for the Amalgamated as an organizer.

Ken: Let's get back - What did you do in these so-called consciousness raising groups in the YWCA?

Bar: Mainly we had club suppers and we had lectures, and we had study classes. I can't even think what they were. But once a week several hundred girls came. I think we served suppers for twenty five or thirty five cents. I think we ate an awful lot of Shepherds pie. [laughs]. It was nice food and recreation. But mainly it was in the conferences and workshops that we would have. And the National Y secretaries were really far out women. They were very progressive and believed in social change. The Y was committed to social change. I believe it still is, but it doesn't function in the same way now. It does more - I should smoke so I wouldn't talke with my hands.

Ken: What's the difference, if you talk better with your hands. What I'm trying to figure out is all of a sudden - here you are, a little farm girl and you come to the city, and you don't get married until you are a little older, and all of a sudden you go to a Norman Thomas meeting and then you go to the Y - there must be more there than you have talked about.

Bar: Right. On the Campus at Denver U. I belonged to - it wasn't an organized group, but there was a group of us, we were radical. And we put out a paper called the Diogenes Lantern. We were looking for an honest man. And it was printed on pink paper because we got the paper and did the mimeographing down at the Labor Council. The reason I dropped out of that was that one of the guys wrote an article on sex, and I wasn't ready for that. I've forgotten what it was about. I don't remember the contents, but we were kind of radicals on the campus.

Then I remember meeting a man who must have been from New York. He was a Jewish fellow with glasses and very fuzzy hair, and he used to read the Daily Worker on the street car. In those days the Daily Worker had headlines blaring out. I was revolted by the Worker. I just couldn't stand it!

I think probably in that Cosmopolitan Club and through these Russians. I wrote a paper in sociology on the sociology of the Soviet Union, and I didn't know what in the hell I was writing about because I didn't understand what was going on there. But I became interested in Russia. Probably that's how it started. Ivan always wanted to go back. His family were just railroad people. He got caught in Kolchak's army. He was just a kid. Otherwise he might have stayed. One of his brothers and his sister stayed.They were teachers. Then his father was pensioned and got taken care of. He was very loyal to what was going on in the Soviet Union at that time.

And I remember I went to the Party headquarters some time during that period.

Bar: It must have been because of my contact with all those students. I can't remember just when that was, but I wanted to join the Communist Party. And they looked at me, all these guys from Union Square in New York City, "Workers and Peasants Unite", you know. They didn't have any idea of what's going on out in the hinderland. So they sent me over to the Soviet-American Friendship Society where all the good middle class proper people went. I never joined. I just skipped it then for a long time.

That's interesting because I watched this thing last night of this girl that became a rebel. I never was in a place where I got hurt, and was from a farm background where there was no political oppression other than just the overall - it's hard to know why I would join this group that was putting out Diogenes Lantern. I think it must have been the students that I met. There were all these Chinese students, and I may have just absorbed more than I knew.

Of course I was a do-gooder too. It came out of the church, I think. You know you want to save everybody and you don't know enough. You should be saving yourself first. I think that's the other thing. The Methodist Church was always a forward looking group. Old Bishop McConnell, he was a man who fought for the eight hour day in the steel mills. At a ministers house where I worked for room and board for a while, Bishop McConnell used to come there and visit. He was a <u>real</u> rebel. He was way out. Bishop Tippett was always progressive. He's still alive. I saw his name in the paper the other day. He's in his eighties and still preaches in various Methodist

Bar: churches around. When I knew him he was just a local preacher, a new preacher about thirty years old, maybe twenty eight.

Ken: Let's cut it off.

Bar: OK.

Labor Women Series
California Historical Society

Interview with Clemmie Barry
Date of Interview: October 13, 1975
Home of Mrs. Barry, Kentfield, Calif.

Interviewer: Lucy Kendall
Transcriber: Lucy Kendall

Begin: Second Interview

Barry: You know, Lucy, in thinking over all of that childhood stuff, we had a hard time getting away from it. It seems a happy time and I kind of wanted [laughs] and I wanted to keep it all.

I was thinking of so many things, like food. Lots of wheat was sold at the time because we didn't have storage. But they had huge grain elevators that were in the little towns, and we had bins at home where grain was stored. And this beautiful red wheat - we used to take a lot of it down to this little old mill. It was on the Little Blue River and it was about twenty miles from our place. And this old mill had a natural waterwheel that was run by the water. I don't remember who the man was who ran it. But dad would take the wheat down there to have it ground - bags and bags of flour. And, brother, when you think of what we pay for unbleached flour now. There was white unbleached flour, and there was bran. And there was another in-between part that we used as breakfast. We had kind of an attic, and I often wonder how that wheat kept without getting bugs in it because now my cupboard is full of little fly-aways half the time because I get these grains from the health food store. That seems to me a very important thing we don't know about now - people getting their own grain ground into flour and the oats into oatmeal.

Another little incident that occurs to me

Barry: when I'm thinking about food was that in the old dirt cellar one time I was carrying a huge crock of sour cream to churn. We churned it in a little round churn that had a little thing that went up and down to make the butter. Then there was this delicious buttermilk. I dropped this big crock [laughs] of sour cream all over me. I've often thought now (I love sour cream). I learned to eat sour cream when I lived in New York. I had a Jewish boy friend who taught me to eat sour cream on strawberries which, to me, was unheard of. I got so addicted to sour cream that I still love it. I remember I had sour cream all over me. That was another thing - the way we made our own food.

I think of that old dirt cellar. That's another story. We had tornados. Now we read about tornados destroying towns. They were doing it in those days. And my father was just terrified of storms. I remember he had a bed made for us kids in this old dirt cave. It was not under the house. It was right next door to the house. And there was a bed for us kids over the potato bin. Sometimes a storm would last several hours. When he would see one of these big thunder and lightening storms coming, he didn't know if there was going to be a lot of wind. There usually was a lot of wind, although that doesn't necessarily mean a tornado. And we kids would sleep on top of the potatoes down in that cellar. And one time it was day time. I always talk about my father, but this was an indication of some kind of a relationship that was going on because I remember seeing the hay rack that was sitting alone side this big machine shed. The wind picked it up and just lifted the frame of it and took it flying across the yard. Well, of course,

Barry: here came dad just scared to death. He grabbed the twins and me to take us down to the cellar. This was day time, and it wasn't so scary, you know, for me. My mother was baking bread and it was just like her - she said she was not going to leave her bread. So I decided I was going to stay with my mother if my mother's baking bread. And I had this kind of little martyr thing in me, I think, too. Anyway, I remember my dad picking me up around the middle. And I was screaming and hollering like anything. And he carried me down to the cellar to save me from the storm.

That also reminds me of this beautiful old corn crib that had a sloping roof, and the hay rack always stood beside it. Sometimes it had hay in it, and sometimes it didn't. We kids would get up to the top of this roof and go flying down and turn somersaults in the air and light in the hay. Of course with me, I never did anything by halfs. [laughs]. I went so fast and turned my somersaults and I missed the hay and landed twenty feet away on the ground. It knocked the wind out of me, but didn't break anything. That's just a little kind of a sample. I never did things by halves.

Another thing I don't think I touched on was - when I was teaching in these little one room schools, teaching the three Rs [reading, writing and arithmetic] just like all the teachers before me had taught, there was a little streak of something there - and I say this in retrospect because what I'm doing now in my dotage is to see this kind of a continuity that sort of made me the kind of person I was.

Barry: I didn't quite accept all the things that were standard. For instance, the school I had gone to for eight years - I went to high school, then normal school, then came back and taught there. Eight grades, thirty five kids, and all in one room. And this old shack, as I recall, was lined with tongue and groove walls. I don't remember what color it was painted. There was this huge old stove in the middle of the room that furnished the heat for the winter. Sometimes you might be lucky and find a boy you could hire out of your great salary to come and start the fires in the winter. Then there had to be the floors swept and the blackboards cleaned and so forth. I remember decorating this school room. I couldn't do it today. We made curtains out of unbleached muslin, and we appliqued flowers on these curtains. They had window shades, but never anything decorative. And it made such a pretty room. And I don't know how I learned that unless I was doing a Four-H Club at that time. Even though I was never able to sew much I was able to teach other people. It was kind of like in my weaving days I was not as good a weaver as I was a teacher. Then I sent to some kind of an outfit in Walden, Massachusetts. It was a teacher's catalog maybe, and I got these pictures. They were sepia prints. I got some for school and I got some for home because we didn't have any pictures on the walls at home except the two old crayons of the two grandpas. And I got The Song of the Lark. I just loved that woman standing there with the _____ in her hands. And then, the Gleaners. Then I was real wild and I bought of a Corot. And that one I got for home. Anyway it was something there that was different than the standard kind

Barry: of thinking. And the other thing that I was really proud of was that I organized hot lunches that year. This was my second year of teaching. We brought our sandwiches in our little dinner buckets, and sometimes we usddto try to toast them over the coals on this big old stove. They would be frozen out in the hallways. The weather was zero with the snow clear up to hear [Ms. Barry held her hand up to her waist]. So I conceived the idea of hot lunches. Somebody gave us an old kerosene stove - the kind of stove we used in those days. It was a kerosene stove that had a kind of a burner. They were very practical and very efficient. This little stove, I think, had three burners. We got big pots. Then the children brought things from home. For instance if we had a big hunk of beef, we would put it in the pot with a lot of vegetables and we would have ahot soup at noon. If you put that on at eight thirty, by twelve you had a beautiful soup to eat with your cold lunch. I don't know what kind of bowls we had. I don't remember that, but I do remember that winter. I had to deal with three old farmers who were on the school board. Theoretically they were the policy makers. And I remember, apropo of the hot lunch, (I don't know if old Burt was on the school board or not) - he had three kids and they were smart kids, but he was such a domineering man they were kind of ~~such~~ put down. His name was Tomlinson. I'll never forget. At one time he sent some beans to school that should have been soaked overnight because we boiled them all morning and they never made soup. And he said, "It serves that teacher right." You see the hurts of people and how they strike out at somebody else. He didn't hurt me. He hurt the kids because they didn't have a hot

Barry: lunch that day. I think he was on the school board.

Anyway, I used to call meetings of these guys. This was unheard of. I remember the first one, and this sounds so typical of me today. I called them all together and said I wanted to discuss plans. I was already organizing a literary society for the community where people would come and read books or plays or something. Of course we had box suppers to raise money. That was where everybody brought a lunch and it was raffled off. Anyway I called the school board together, and the big joke was that Clemmie said to them, "Now I would like to have your advice on these things, not that I'll take it [laughter]. And that was the pattern. I'm afraid nobody was ever able to tell me much because I always knew better. And actually that's a good trait. Now, in my later life, we strive to know what we need for ourselves and to be able to do what we need for ourselves. And I was so oriented for so many years in doing for others that I neglected my own life. Anyway that always amused me. It was about the hot lunches and decorating the school - it seemed to me it was a very distinctive thing in my life as an eighteen year old kid.

We had lace curtains and wall paper. And I remember when we built the addition to the house I remember the parlor had white wall paper with huge pink roses on it. We had an Axminister rug, and we bought a base burner stove which burned anthracite coal. It never made a blaze, it just burned. It made a nice place for necking with your boy friend because you didn't have any lights. Except on Sunday nights, if you had a

Barry: date - that's the night dad always had the old clock. When it became time for the young man to leave Clem was up there (my father's name was Clemmet and I got to be named Clemmie after him) - when you would hear dad winding the clock that was the signal that they had better go.

Another thing. We used to sit outside in the buggy (they had horses and buggys then). I remember one night dad came outside in his nightshirt and started to urinate off the end of the porch. And in those days that was a thing you didn't do. And I think he knew what he was doing. Maybe he didn't. But that was enough to scare this guy [laughs] into leaving.

Now this is a nice little story of my mother, just a short one. I remember one time I was with my friend. She and I were with these boys and we were smoking cigarettes under the old elm tree. This elm tree was sort of a center of activities. It was night. The twins were peering out the window, and they saw us. So the next morning they told mother "Clemmie was out there smoking cigarettes." And my mother said, "Let her smoke. It will just make her sick and then she won't want to do it any more." And whether that had any influence on me - you know, I never learned to smoke. I tried, and when I was with people I would waste a few. That's why I never smoked pot, because I never learned to inhale. So that kind of catches up a few instances.

I seemed not to fit the group, quite. I say it with pride that it was a part of what I was being, and I got away from the narrowness of that existence.

I remember when I was teaching kindergarten and I came back from the Estes Conference when Don TIPPETT, who is now a retired Bishop and

Barry: lives over in Berkeley, asked me to come down and work in his church and go to school, I came back home and told ~~me~~ THEM. I remember the president of the school board said, "Clemmie you could teach here the rest of your life if you wanted to." And that was just about what I didn't want to do. By this time my affair with Lloyd was over and all the men who were eligible (I was all of twenty-two) there weren't any men around. I think that catch's us up a little bit.

Ken: This was during World War I. How did the war affect you otherwise?

Barry: I was terribly romantic. I had soldiers all over the world I was writing to. Many of the young men had gone from our town. I do remember this. I was talking the other day about going down to the mail box on old Rex and getting the mail. And I remember we got the daily newspaper, the St. Joe Press, with all those casualty lists. And I remember reading those casualty lists. There was one man from our town. He was kind of a rounder, some one the nice girls would never go with. He was the first casualty from our town. And I felt bad even though he was considered not a nice man. And I really remember thinking this - how wonderful it would be if there wasn't any war and these names (they always published them from all over that area) - that's the only really emotional thing that I remember. And with Lloyd, this man with whom I was breaking up, he went away and stayed for a long time. Also I worked in the fields. I touched on that the other day. I enjoyed working in the fields.

And you know, I don't think I mentioned about milking cows. I don't think there's anything more pleasurable than sitting on a footstool

Barry: ~~made like a swimming pool~~. It had a stick across the top that you sat on and balanced on under the old cow's udders to milk. And you also, balancing on the stool, held the milk bucket between yuor ~~feet~~ KNEES. That was quite a feat, as I remember. I can't remember how little I was when I learned to do that, and did it, because you milked your share of the cows morning and night. And we always had a bunch of cats. All the cats from the neighborhood, and even a wild cat came. Dad didn't mind having them in the barn because they kept the rats and mice down. But my mother would never let us bring cats in the house. And that grieved us because we had special cats that were our pets which we were never allowed to bring in the house. And the cats would stand up on their hind legs and we would squirt milk at them and they would beat it with their front paws. Somehow it slowed it down and they never missed a drop. Then if you didn't squirt milk at them and they were a little bit hungry they would climb up the old cows back leg and she would probably kick you over to get rid of the cat. And we had a huge big bread pan in the barnyard that was filled with milk so the cats always had milk, and they killed the rats and mice.

I remember once there was a terrible ruckus down at the barn and dad was swearing. It was just a terrible noise. And we went to the barn and a rat had run up his overalls and gotten into his underwear. That's really scary, because a rat bite is poison. I don't know what the end of that was. So there we are again. What did you ask me to turn me on to that?

Ken: About your war years. Where were you when the war was over?

Bar: ~~I was married~~. I remember our trying to celebrate. I don't know how the news came, because we had no radio. Maybe somebody phoned. I don't know. We had telephones by that time. I remember how glad we all felt. And there was some kind of trying to celebrate. Oh God, when I think of how many wars I've been through! And all of those days of wishing it weren't. Well, I tried. I dedicated my life for a period of time to stop it. I still do. Okay.

Ken: Let's see. Last time we ended up with just before you left your last job to go into union organizing. How did you get that job?

Bar: I knew this beautiful woman. She worked for Governor Pinchot. [PENNA] Most people don't know how important Governor Pinchot was. Along with Theodore Roosevelt, he was one of the first environmentalists. He was responsible for a lot of legislation on environment. And he had a Department of Labor that was very good. I am sure this was still Pinchot's time. And Steve Rauchenbush, whose dad was a Methodist Minister, one of the first social gospel people (I didn't know him) - but Steve was the head of the Labor Department in Harrisburg and Edy Christiansen worked for him. I guess Edy and I met. We were always involving people like that in Y [WCA] conferences. So when I was leaving the Y and I was also trying to get rid of Ivan Edy said, "Why don't you come and work for the Amalgamated?" This was 1934, and the union drive under the Roosevelt New Deal was beginning. So she arranged for me to have a date with Jack Potovsky. I think Jack's retired now, but he was the Assistant Vice President to Sidney Hillman, and then he became President of the Union.

Bar: And the neat thing (you know how tied I am into re-evaluation counseling now) they have a chair at Brandeis University, a Potovsky chair at the school, and Morrie Stein is the head of that department and is re-evaluation counseling. So that's what they teach there. And all these wonderful people in our re-evaluation counseling come from Brandeis. (laughs) And I've often thought if I ever get to see Stein I'll tell him I knew the guy who put this chair up for him. I don't know the whole story.

Anyway, I went to see Jack in New York. I remember the dress I wore. That's another thing. I haven't even talked about that. I've always had the nicest looking clothes. I've been a culprit. I'm going back.

Ken: That's all right.

Bar: This clothes thing is kind of important because in my youth they were made for me - Aunt Mary or my mother. Then the graduation dress with all the ruffles was made by my older sister, and I remember he saying that if she ever went to hell it would be because of me because she sewed so much for me on Sunday. And when I think of my first - oh, I can't go back that far. But I do remember the dress I had on. It was a (in those days silk was common) shirtwaist plaid kind of in beiges and blues - a very mixed plaid. It was silk, I think, and it was so pretty. It seems to me I had a hat. I think we were still wearing hats. And I went up to New York to interview Jack Potovsky. And I'll <u>never</u> forget how angry I was at him. I never knew how to get angry, but I didn't like what he said. He said, "Now, how would you like to go slumming down in the South?" And here am I, a farm kid, that has grown into being kind of bourgeois, god forbid, and now knowing

Bar: what I'd grown into, that's the appearance I must have given him. And here I am, delighted that maybe I'm going to go help "the woikers". Oh, God! (laughs) Anyway, I think I protested his saying that. I said I felt there was a great need for unions. In those days unions were different than they are now - that beautiful drive towards people taking care of themselves was incredible. So that's how I got the job.

But you know what those bastards did! They paid their organizers twenty five dollars a week. And until I got wise I didn't even get my own expenses. The men, I learned later, Frank Daniel was the head organizer for the South, and he was the national chairman of the Socialist Party. And he was one of those heavy boozers. And he was getting whatever he got a week, plus all his expenses, and his car. And I was so innocent I didn't know. So I went to work for them for twenty-five dollars a week, furnishing my own car and paying for my own food.

Ken: What did you do on the job?

Bary The first job was - we went to Norfolk, Virginia where there was a huge clothing plant. You see what was happening was these shops were running away from New York where they could get cheaper labor. It was hurting the union too, of course. And the other thing, it was hurting the union employers up in New York because union clothing had to compete with the scab clothing that was made down South, like in Richmond and Norfolk. This was old Sam Finklestein's plant. And we were sent in to organize that.

By this time Hillman had worked very closely with Roosevelt [Franklin Delano] in saving our capitalist system by setting up the

Bar: NRA [National Recovery Act] with minimum wages. The minimum wage for clothing workers was thirteen dollars a week. The pressers and cutters and some of the more skilled people got a little bit more.

In Norfolk most of the pressers were black. Those men, many of them were college graduates and there was no where for them to get a job, bedame pressers.

This was a huge plant. I don't know how many hundreds of workers there were. Wait a minute. That wasn't my first job because the first one was much keener. This was another run away. It was a shirt factory down in Harrington, Delaware, and I was sent down there by myself.

Through some contact with the Y I got the name of a nice woman I could stay with. And I had to be incognito. I didn't dare tell anybody what I was up to. It was real cops and robbers. And I got this home to stay in - a beautiful room - in Dover, Delaware. It was just down the road [from Harrington] about ten or twelve miles, as I remember. And it was beautiful food, really nice. I guess on my twenty-five dollars a week, in those days, I think I paid five dollars for my room.

I was supposed to organize this shirt factory. And I came in completely cold. I went down every afternoon and hung around. And I'm not the most inconspicuous person in the world (laughs). Here I was tall, and I was very pretty, a really beautiful gal. I hovered around a restaurant and I finally met the editor of a newspaper who wrote a column about me. I don't have it and I sure wish I did because it was really neat, afterwards - how I had sneaked into this town and what I did to them. And it was complimentary because he was glad about what I did. The women were earning three and four

Bar: dollars a week in this shirt factory. Then I got contact - I have a letter still from Georgie Meany telling what a wonderful woman I am and that any other union person should give me all the help they can. So there were post office people and a railroad man. He was a signalman on the railway. His name was Passmore. I remember that beautiful, beautiful man. Of course this town had two thousand people, and women came in from all the farm lands around, women of all ages, to earn a few extra dollars, because this was 1934. I may be a little mixed up on my dates, but it seems to me that this was my first job. Maybe it was Finklestein, and I can't remember. Anyway, this was where I was on my own.

This man knew the women, and he gave me the names. And I went around at night and visited these women. I think it's just amazing, the trust they had in me. I signed them up in the union and I kept the cards under my pillow.

What we were working for was to get a majority signed up and then ask for a N.L.R.B. [National Labor Relations Board] election. So I think I had a little over fifty percent. So I went up to New York that week end to talk it over with dear Alex Cohen(Oh, how I loved that man! Alex was one of my bosses too) to see what we would do next. The Amalgamated was a marvelous union to work for. They really cared about the people, and they gave an organizer all the support that one could need in doing whatever needed to be done.

When I came back it turned out that the boss had found out a union organizer had been in town and had signed up these people. And this one woman (there is always one like this) was completely unafraid of anything. Somehow, when the boss attacked them, she let him know she was a union member. Oh, I know, he was going

Bar: to have them sign what we call a yellow dog contract. When he heard that I had been in town and a lot of them had signed up, he put this thing up that everybody had to sign up that they wouldn't join a union. This woman just told him right off. He fired her. This was on Friday night. When I came back Sunday all hell had broken loose.

We didn't want a strike. We would rather have just had the election and won it that way. These women - Edith had been fired and by God they were going out on strike. And I was really pretty wishy-washy because Iknew we didn't want a strike. So I said, "Okey, the only thing we can do is to set up picket lines and see who goes in and who doesn't go in."

There was a restaurant right next door to the factory, and they rented a few rooms right above the restaurant, and I was sleeping there. And the foreman also had his room there, and he was some scab that had come down from New York. And we used to meet at breakfast. I would be having an ammonia-coke. This was during the strike. And he would be having alka-seltzer or something.

Anyway this Monday morning the strike was on, and it was so interesting that some of the women who had signed cards didn't come out and a lot of the women who hadn't did. It sometimes works that way. So this strike went on all summer. (This was after Norfolk. Now I know because it was later). Everything happened in that strike that could have happened in a strike in San Francisco. The mayor called me in. He couldn't understand why the women would pay attention to an outsider like me. Why didn't I go back to where I came from, and all that

Bar: kind of thing. Then theCity Council passed an ordinance against picketing. Before that, when we were picketing and singing, of course, all those good old union songs, they would always pick me up and take me over to the Justice of the Peace. And I would pay a five dollar fine. They were trying to make me stop the women from picketing. I said, "I can't make them do anything. They know what they need to do." You know, all this smart ass stuff [laughs].

Anyway they passed this ordinance. So that afternoon (by that time Edy Christiansen had come down, this woman who had been my mentor. She was an old time organizer in Rochester, way back. She was much older than I) Edy was there. She was so good at keeping people's spirits up. I just went over to the depot to mail a letter. I don't know whether they did this purposely or not, but anyway they came and arrested Edy and all the women on the picket line. And their jail in Harrington couldn't hold them, so they drove them all the way to Dover and put them in that jail. This was really an example of how we need to have faith in people, because I didn't have faith. I was really bleah.

What happened was, all these women were in jail. And I immediately contacted the national office to see what they could do to send lawyers down and so on. But the people took it into their own hands. All the fathers and the brothers, and the uncles and the sweethearts of those women came into town and forced that City Council to have a meeting, and they said, "We're not going to leave until those women are home." I wasn't their spokesman. I never thought that this could happen. And the judge was conveniently out of

Bar: town - the one who could have released them. So I don't know what time it was. I think it was about one o'clock in the morning that this Council couldn't hold out any longer. These men were really getting angry. And yet there was no violence. There was just this demand, "We want our women home." There were grandmothers, you know, and people of all ages. I have pictures of that strike, and it was really beautiful. Anyway, at one o'clock in the morning we called the jail in Dover to tell them to come home, that they had been released.

Well Edy had made it such a lark that they didn't want to come home. They had washed their panties and their underwear, and they didn't want to come home because they couldn't dress. Anyway they did come home. I don't know what happened about their panties and their stockings and so on.

To me it waa a good example that I was not the leader there. These men wanted their women home, and they got them. So the outcome of that was we couldn't have a big picket line. So we created a quilt making party because the women came into the headquarters. And I still have two of the red lids. I set up a kitchen in our office. It had a stove in it where we had coffee and soup and things. So I still have the lids from those pots. They are little red porcelaine lids. Anyway, we made the quilts. Each once embroidered their name on the quilt. They made it out of cheap scraps. It was lousy material. During the depression some of the fabric was really awful cotton they made shirts out of, and the women would carry pices home. So we made this quilt. Edy designed it, I think. That's why now I remember the date because the strike began some time in June, I think, of

Bar: 1936. You see it was two years after Norfolk. I guess it doesn't matter whether this is chronological or not. I did this on my own. It was my problem.

Anyway it was my birthday the 24th of August. So they had decided they were going to give the quilt to me. I said no. I didn't want it. I didn't think it was fair. I said I didn't think it was fair and what we ought to do is put all our names in a hat and whoever wins it wins it. So what they did, they all put my name in the hat so that I got it honestly. So I had that quilt until we left Westwood. I had this friend up there who dearly loves quilts. I gave it to Sally Posner, and Susy, her sister in law who teaches quilt making wherever she and Richie go - Susy carried that quilt with her or she has pictures of it because to them that was the most exciting thing in the world. And I remember now the date was 1936..

We finally won a settlement, but the son of a b _____. After the settlement he moved. This was in Delaware and he moved over somewhere in Virginia and left all these people without jobs.

By this time another shirt company had moved in, but it was also non -union.

That's when I set up the kitchen because they [The Amalgamated] gave me money. We paid those people more money than they had been earning. I've forgotten how many thousands of dollars I administered during that period paying these people. And we got jobs for those people who could move in Baltimore, where we had union shops, and so on. But it was a very sad thing. And I think they finally organized the other shop there.But that's where the dirty kind of thing comes in. It's something you can't help.

Ken: Well, Clemmie, what was the structure of this strike.

Bar: I'll have to admit I can't remember much structuring. I would say there were about one hundred people involved. And we didn't have a negotiating team from the strike. This guy lived in New York. He knew the union and the union knew him, so I'm sure the negotiations went with Alex or Potofsky or someone like that at the top.

And all we were demanding was a vote or the minimum as outlined by the N.I.R.A., which was thirteen dollars a week for the women at the machines. And then the cutters - as I remember the men who were cutters were scabs from New York. They were old anti-union people.

Then there was a stink bomb thrown that I had nothing to do with. And those are the things that the nice sweet types did. But there was a stink bomb thrown into the plant one time. And you know that was written up. There was this awful man in the S.R.A. when I was a social worker who wrote this up for the Argonaut Magazine about me and a bomb during the strike. That's when I was organizing the State County and Municipal Workers in San Francisco.

This one lasted all through the summer into September until we got the settlement, and then he moved away.

Ken: Did you have strike committees?

Bar: No, I don't remember any kind of committee work.

Ken: Who determined who picketed, and when?

Bar: The women must have decided among themselves. I don't remember that.

Ken: Did you have union meetings during that period?

Bar: Well, we were having meetings every day because we were sitting in this hall sewing on this quilt.

Ken: What did you discuss?

Bar: I'm sure that there were lots of consciousness raising discussions going on. I don't remember. But I wouldn't have been there if there hadn't been I'm sure. And Edy the same way because Edy was really a marvelous person.

What happened was in this little town they doubled their police force. They had one policeman, and now they had two.

And Carlie Terry, who became a famous politician in Delaware, I guess he was the State Attorney General, or something. He came in the day they arrested all these women. That afternoon I was trying to negotiate to get them released. I remember Terry came down. And they were saying they were going to ride me out of town on a rail. I was so smart-assed, and I said, "You know. I'm a nobody now. But if you do that to me I will become a martyr and my name will go down in history, and I don't think you really want to make that kind of move." They really wouldn't of course, but they were trying to scare me.

And I remember somewhere in that time I made up songs. The Music Goes Round and Round was one of the popular songs then. And I wrote "The Pickets Go Round and Round [sings] and They Come Out Here". And "They Set You Back on Your Heels, Goodie, Goodie" and we sang "You Know How That Feels". And this was sung to Mr. Finklestein.

I was such a ham, and I was so sure of myself. I was really a real smart ass when I think back about it. And I think that's really all on that one.

Now the other one, the Norfolk one - that's the one where all the big guns were.

Ken: What about Richmond?

Bar: The Friendman Harry Marx factory that was in Richmond was the one where I was involved most. And that was one of the few cases where the Supreme Court determined whether the National Labor Relations Board was constitutional.

Ken: Then let's get on to that and forget Norfolk for now.

Bar: There again was another big runaway place. They had the most ruthless lawyers. So we were there doing the same thing, but we didn't try to have meetings because anytime anybody went to a meeting they were fired. So again it was signing people up on the Q.T. trying to get a majority. But this was a big plant with five or six hundred people I guess.

Dick was in on this because by this time he had come back from Spain and he was following me around when I was organizing (not that I wasn't enjoying it).

I don't think we had a strike there. That was just the workers were being fired.

I think one of the things that has to be emphasized was the attempt to involve a broader community. Somewhere in me was this always wanting people that were not involved in the union per se, like the League of Women Voters (maybe they were formed then) - I think I would like to go back to that conference that I just showed you the picture of in Delaware.

I draw a parallel because we called a conference. It was right on the Delaware Maryland border, Delmar. It was right on the border and that's why the name. Now I've refreshed my mind by reading the article I had written for the Amalgamated paper, the Advocate. I didn't remember having written it, and as I was reading it I wondered who the reporter was, and it spelled Patricia Manchester's name wrong. But maybe she did spell it that way. It was

Bar: an attempt, and I suppose it was kind of a hold over from the Y, because that's what we did in the Y. We had conferences. Nowadays we call it consciousness raising. Now it's raising the consciousness of all paoeple so they don't accept the stereotypes. Anyway, we did call together this meeting of all the workers in the cotton garment industry in Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland also because there were a lot of runaway plants there.

We had people like Patricia Manchester from Wilmington, who was head of the Consumers League, speak. Then we had Ada Rose from the ILGWU, and all these different people speaking on different subjects - labor laws and all these different things that were beyond just the union representation. And I think that was another - it wasn't a deep rooted thing in me at all. Everything I ever did, whether it was an Epworth League Conference or a Y.W.C.A. conference, there was always some thread of enriching lives, not only my own life but other people's lives. Maybe it was a little lopsided. I was enriching other people's lives more than my own at that time. I kind of liked that thing in me. I liked what we were doing there.

While I'm on this - in Washington, D.C. where we had a strike, there was the League of Women Shoppers that was organized at that time. There were Congressmen's wives, and I remember Burton Wheeler's daughter. I don't remember her name. Old Burton Wheeler from Montana, that old isolationist. But she was a wonderful woman. And these women came down and picketed with us. So it was involving of other people into a higher and better awareness of what the struggle was of people who were working for three dollars a week.

Interview with Clemmie Barry
Date of Interview: October 20, 1975
Home of Mrs. Barry, Kentfield, Calif.

Interviewer: Lucy Kendall
Transcriber: Lucy Kendall

Begin: Third Interview

Ken: Ok, Clemmie, let's get on to the main organizing job that you did, for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

Barry: You see, the previous story which I told about the strike was actually in 1936. And I assume that I must have started in the spring of '36, and the strike was in the summer. So I am actually going backwards because it was 1934 - the first assignment I had at Norfolk with the Sam Finklestein Company.

Somehow I tried to make it clear earlier in the tape (and I think I did) that all these plants were run-aways from New York where they had to pay union scale. And they came down South (and this was famous during that period) where they could hire cheaper labor and sell their things cheaper. And of course the union manufacturer in New York was as anxious to have these people organized as the union was. The union looked at it from the humanitarian point of view of getting people organized so they would get a decent wage. They really had that spirit. They were a beautiful group of people. But the employers wanted them organized so they wouldn't compete with them on the market because they undersold on the market. I will do the market thing later because there are a lot of things in there which we need to look at from a philosophical point of view of where I am now.

It was some time after the Delaware thing that I went to Friedman Harry Marx, and was sent there to do what we were doing everywhere - to sign people up as union members, and then with the hope, when we got a majority, we could ask for

Bar: a vote under the National Labor Relations Act. You will remember that this was under the Roosevelt "New Deal", and Sidney Hillman was on the N.I.R.A. [National Industrial Recovery Act] setting up standards. Sidney was the President of the Amalgamated.

So I did the same thing in Richmond. It is sort of like being a detective. You go in and you get names of people who work in the plants, you visit them, and then sign them up, and then sleep with the cards under your pillow so that nobody will find out.

However there, as I recall, we did try having meetings (my voice is really shot today) in church basements, but it became completely unsafe for people, for their jobs.
I was living in a hotel then. That was something I really liked. I enjoyed living in hotels. It was a lovely hotel. We always had hominy grits for breakfast.

I suppose I should tell you about my life then. One of the things I learned to eat was roe herring. There is a certain time of the year when the herring are ready to spawn, they are taken and pickled in brine. The fish is served to you with a hard roll. The whole fish is served, but you just eat the roe out. And as I remember, that was a great thing. Things were cheap. I had never had honeydew melon, I think. I don't know what time of the year that was. Anyway, those are the associations I have. I had never eaten crab. I am a landlubber, you know. I think it was in Norfolk that I learned to eat crab.

A thougt I had that was importaant was that I don't remember how many different groups of workers came to visit me in my hotel room

Bar: from other industries. They wanted us to organize them. They were men who worked in planing mills, or had to do with wood, and theoretically under the CIO set up they would have come under carpenters. Of course the carpenters under Hutchinson was a very tight reactionary organization and they weren't doing anything about organizing all these people. They were mill workers. And there was such a spirit all over of people - You know I have to give credit to Roosevelt for this because everyone was so demoralized during the thirties where there seemed to be no hope. Unfortunately we've gone through the whole process again. But there was some kind of thing for the human spirit. Now this sounds a little corny and a little romantic. But there was this thing that pervaded all the people who worked. They had no voice and were living on the most marginal incomes. I felt so badly that I could not spend my energy to help these other people. We couldn't refer them to the Carpenters Union because they wouldn't guarantee anything. I think probably what I did was just to - I may have given them cards to sign themselves up. Finally, in a year or so, the CIO did come down there in a big organizing drive, so I guess they finally got organized.

What happened then was I signed up as many as I could, and so many got fired. Then we got this case into the Supreme Court to test whether the National Labor Relations Act was constitutional. We had the proof that this company was interstate commerce. If they shipped any clothing across the [state] border, that was interstate commerce and came under the law.

I remember this slick lawyer they had - oooh he was slick and a stinker. I guess we had some

Bar: lawyers too. But anyway that was the question. So all our activity was halted there until the supreme court thing.

And the Amalgamated was paying benefits. Anybody that got fired was paid twenty-five dollars a week. It was a whale of a lot more than they were earning. But it did give them belief in the union, and the union did have a huge strike fund.

At that time, during this period, I remember I was sent up to Lancaster, Pennsylvania to organize the handkerchief workers. I don't know how they came under garment workers. [laughs]. And that was the one I don't remember much about. I remember I didn't enjoy it.

Then it was in the spring that the Supreme Court declared that the NLRB was constitutional.

I never was any good at being a business agent. I never liked dealing with the employer. I guess you would say I was a good rabble rouser and I could get people to join the union. But when it came down to bargaining I didn't know the issues of what you bargained on. You had to have some guy that worked in a clothing plant to know what the issues were. And there we did have committees that were in on the bargaining. I have some pictures from the Richmond paper. They are pictures of committees who were in on the bargaining.

I remember Charlie Weinstien came down from Philadelphia. So people were involved in decision making although they could not have done anything unless they had that big organization at the top.

You know, I got into a lot of trouble with Hillman at that time. I think probably the only time I got balled out was then. You know, the Women's Wear Daily is the famous magazine now, from New York. But at that time (I don't know if there still is) there was what they called the

Bar: Men's Wear Daily which kept most of the union and the employers informed on what was going on. So I gave an interview to someone on the Men's Wear Daily saying (of course it was the truth, and I was so naive that I would tell the truth without thinking of the implications) that there was no way that Southern workers could organize unless they had government protection because I had proved that they want the union, but as soon as they join the union without government protection they are fired. Sidney was more left than I was. He said, "The workers can do it themselves. You've got to have that. People have to remember the workers can do it themselves." Of course I didn't agree. I knew we did have to have government protection.

So finally (this is the date on this picture here) there was this big rally on May 11th, 1937. We had signed the contract.All the people were put back to work with back pay, and everybody was a hero, It was really nice. And you can see from that picture there were hundreds and hundreds of people and I am standing there leading them singing "Glory, glory Amalgamated" to the Tune of John Brown's Body, "for the union makes us strong."That was a long hard pull there, but there's really not much more to tell because there was no strike. It was just signing up the majority of the people in the union. If I think of anything else, I'll go back.

I don't think I've mentioned before, the reason so many of the ex-Y secretaries, women who had worked with the women who worked in mills, (we were called Industrial Secretaries because we dealt with mill workers who were women) so many of us came into the unions because there was a better place for doing something for the conditions of the people than just inviting them to a club supper or

Bar: or a swimming pool at the Y. So people like me, good Nordic types, went south because Potovsky (I don't think I mentioned this before, maybe I did) was a handsome guy with whiskers. In those days people didn't wear whiskers like they do now. Yet, after we would be established everybody loved him. He was one of the nicest people. He was a gentle beautiful person.

I met a man over at Emeritus College. He was on our advisory board. And he was in the clothing business. It was so funny. Here we meet,forty years later. And he had to deal with Potovsky. And, of course, he didn't like him. The bosses didn't like him. They called him the "bearded lady". That's just an incident.

I think probably, Lucy, that does that. Then the Norfolk thing is a much more complicated story.

Ken: Let me ask something - you got the Supreme Court decision and then the contract was signed. What happened after you left, or did you help organize the union before you left? Who set it up?

Bar: I don't remember who. This may have been the officers [pause] . We had officials and a president. I'm sure we did. You couldn't leave without having something. Then, being close to Philadelphia, and Baltimore, I'm sure the business agents there came and saw to it that the agreement was enforced until we could train people. I remember, we did have shop stewards. We set up shop stewards to take up grievances and to make sure that the agreement was lived up to.

Ken: Then the structure of the union wasn't your business? You just organized?

Bar: That's it. You see I had no experience in knowing how much you paid. And it was all piece work. It had been boiled down to piece work. So it had to be someone who knew the structure of a garment, and how much time you had to put in on

Bar: it, setting piece rates and so on. But we had two meetings. One meeting at the high school was, I think, when the announcement was made. I think I read it to you, but maybe I should read it. I'll finish off Friedman Harry Marx by reading that telegram I got from Potovsky. This is April 28th, 3:30 P.M., 19 ____. It's a postal telegram to Clemmie Shuck, Richmond Hotel or the Lyric Theatre. The Lyric Theatre - that's where we had the meeting.

> "Convey to the Friedman Harry Marx workers my congratulations on their first union victory, the abolition of the unit system. Our next is to obtain full recognition and a union agreement. Am confident we will succeed in the near future. Meantime drive ahead for complete unionization. Hope to be with you at the next meeting. Only through unity of purpose will we achieve our goal ask Rudick [Phil] to look me up at the Lord Baltimore Hotel in the morning. Jacob S. Potovsky."

This must have been the second meeting, because he was there at that meeting, and he spoke.

Ken: What was the most exciting job of organizing you did?

Bar: A small shop at Harrington contained all the elements of a big city strike and all the blossoming of people. I particularly enjoyed that because it was mine alone. Of course the Richmond place was mine alone too until we got organized. I think I liked it best because it was more home town and was smaller.

Ken: That we discussed.

Bar: Yes. That we've already done.

When I first joined up with the Amalgamated I was sent with Edy Christianson to Norflok to organize the Finklestein plant, which was another huge clothing factory.

Bar: That was difficult. They had many black, especially black men working. They were probably college graduates that could not get a job. And they worked in the pressing department. That's where we got lost the other day.

We signed up as many people as we could there. Always that was our tactic - to try and get a majority signed up so that we could ask for an election. And really that mechanism was a marvelous tool because if it could stop a strike, then that was good.

Whatever happened, I don't know what made us have to call the strike. But there waa a strike called and it was of such hugh proportions you couldn't possibly have all the strikers on the picket lines.

We set up two huge tents. And this was a very hard pill for me to swallow. We had one tent for the white workers and one tent for the black workers because in Norfolk,Virginia, in 1934, you didn't integrate people. It would have aplit a lot of things. It would have split the union had we, I suppose.

There was a marvelous interchange, a very marvelous interchange between the two tents, especially the men. And I suppose the women had all the fears and all the cultural hang ups, you know, so the white women didn't dare associate with the black men. And I think it was very hard for us as white women organizers because, as I've learned now, the black people didn't show the contempt they had for "whitey". They would say yes, but I'm sure the feeling was just as strong as it is today. Yet they came out ond hundred precent in the strike. They were very loyal.

There we had organization - I guess you would call it a soup kitchen. We had food in these tents. And we paid benefits to the people.

Bar: I remember one awful day a woman was killed. They were driving a car in the rain and somehow a train is coming and you don't see it, and the signal was not clear or something, and I remember it was raining and one of our strikers was killed in this car accident. A train hit them. I felt, oh that's really going to ruin the strike because people will say if that woman had been inside working she would not have been killed. She was a woman how had a couple of kids. It was really a sad day.

Let me think more.That strike went on for a long time.

Ken: What I'd like to know-what dates was the strike, how many people involved, what they manufactured.

Bar: Let's see. It was the Finklestein Clothing Company that had run away from New York and had hired Southern workers. And there (I don't know if I ever emphasized this) the National Recovery Act had set up wage scales. And thirteen dollars a week was the minimum. And I think the pressers got a little more because they were skilled workers. But it was a plant that manufactured men's suits, you know, coats, vests and pants. And I would say there were at least five hundred workers there. Maybe more. It was a huge plant. I have a couple of pictures of the strike, and there were a lot of people involved. This was in Norfolk, Virginia, and it was the summer of 1934. That was the summer I left the YWCA, and this was my first assignment. Then from June up through the fall, I don't remember how long it lasted.I know we finally did get an agreement.

Bar: I know you are interested in the set up of committees and so on. I know we had picket duty. But don't remember any arrests. I don't remember any violence. We tried not to have any. Of course in some cases the provocateurs come in. But I don't recall any arrests or anything. After all, it's forty years ago, and the thing that stands out most to me was the fact that they had the black workers in one tent and the white workers in another. And even then that bothered me.

And of course there was always a marvelous apirit. I was a good spirit builder, and Edy was too. We nurtured the human spirit in everybody. I don't know how to express that. I think we helped people gain a sense of their own importance, and understanding of their own importance. I don't think I knew what I was doing. I didn't set out to do that. But I knew that's what happened that people who were demoralized and worried and working under conditions that they worked - it was like the whole thing in the country at that time. There was hope. There was some kind of hope. Like we are in a big, big shambles right now, a worse shambles to me than the thirties because our values are gone. We have no sense of value in this country at this moment. At least that's the way I feel. And there is no hope. I don't know of anybody who has hope for anything except George _____, and God forbid. So I think that's about as much as I can remember.

Ken: I just want to ask one more question. Did anybody work during the strike. Did the plant continue functioning?

Bar: I think there were a few scabs. There must have been. I don't think we were able to close it down completely. And that was true in Delaware. Of course in Richmond, since there wasn't a strike, it was just a question of getting the people who had been fired back to work.

Bar: I am sure that there were scabs. In that period of time there was much less class consciousness. Of course now I think of the difference of what the unions are now and what they were then. We really represented something that was a better thing for people. Like Hillman bawling me out for saying we had to rely on the government.

You know the Amalgamated, when old Joe Slossberg was president, they had a socialist statement in their charter. They were for socialism. My god [laughs] any union now that would have that now, Meany*would have them out the window. Of course now unions are so much part of the government, even though Meany goes through the motions now of fighting the government. God, he supported the Vietnam war to the hilt. And the workers have always supported wars because then they got better wages, and they got more work in order to make more bombs.

Something I just remembered. It just flipped in my head. I don't think I ever told about my father with regard to unions. He didn't believe in unions because it made his overalls cost more. I was just thinking, here was I believing so much in it. But I knew he didn't know the workers were just in the same boat the poor old farmers were.

Let's see what we can do now.

Ken: What I'd like to do now - this is sort of a jump back, but we got to your marriage with Ivan and your splitting up finally, but when did you meet Dick, for instance. What kind of life did you have between the marriages?

Bar: There's one story. Stories like this you shouldn't tell until everybody's dead.

Ken: Well, the don't. [laughter]

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*National President of the AFL. Then National President of the merged AFL-CIO after William Green.

Bar: I don't think it matters. This was thirty ~~four~~ three when I left Ivan. I guess I describe some of the life with him when we went to Columbia, and all this group of students that were around us.

Ken: Yes, you did.

Bar: Then I was leading kind of a free life. But he was still hanging around. And I was going with a man that was with the Nye Committee that was investigating the munitions industry. It was under Senator Nye from North Dakota. And they were having the same kind of investigations that go on and on, having these hearings in Washington. And the man who was running these(I'll call him Steve) waa a very famous guy. He had been in Pinchot's Cabinet, and so on. Anyway, I had been dating Steve, and spending week ends with him. And he was kind of a nice person.

Oh, Leo Huberman. There's a book published by one of the left presses by Leo Huberman. So Leo Huberman and Steve were friends. So Leo was involved somewhere in Washington. Ivan came down to Washington. Here I had left him and the divorce was under way. And he came down because he had heard I was going with Steve. And he attacked Steve with a pop bottle in the hallways of the Senate Building. Of course this could have been a terrible scandal for Steve. Here he is the chief investigator for the Nye Committee. And I remember Leo getting ahold of me and telling me to call him Ivan off. And I said, "I can't call him off. I don't have anything to do with him any more." But he was crazy. Poor old Ivan was crazy. I don't know what happened to him.

And thenI used to play poker on Saturday

Bar: nights. Raymond Graham Swing. You remember him as editor of the Nation. And his wife used to try to sign me up in the Women's Party.* At that time I was very dumb. I was so independent myself that I didn't realize the long term thing of all the men being in the government, and all that kind of thing I know now. And at that period (this was in nineteen thirty five) the Y didn't support the women's movement because it would take away the laws we had worked so hard to get to protect women. So I wasn't completely sold on it. But I remember that the Swings - I don't know, but I could drop a lot of names - and we played poker on Saturday nights. And they always had highballs. And even then, like my first day at school when I couldn't see straight [refers to getting drunk easily] - and I remember one night - I used to do this when we went to dinner in Chinatown in San Francisco. I would always upset the tea. I would have a cup of tea in front of me, and somehow I don't see with this left eye. So one night I upset this tall highball. So everybody laughed it off and they brought me another. So I laughed, and just to prove that I did it on purpose, I did it again. I just remembered that little incident.

I came into Washington a lot then. Any of these places, Richmond or Baltimore- all these town where we were working [were near]. And it must have been October of nineteen thirty six, just before the elections, I was very much involved with the Amalgamated in supporting Roosevelt. Of Course Al Landon was

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*Evidently referring to Alice Paul's movement for the Equal Rights Amendment

Bar: was running against him. And I had come into Washington for one of the first farm workers parties. In later years we got used to drinking ourselves to death to raise money for causes. And this was at some fancy house out in Georgetown. I don't know whose home it was. But there were a lot of liberal people involved. So here was a party for the onion pickers who were on strike up in New Jersey.

I think I said before I always designed my own clothes. I thought I looked good, and I think I probably did. This was a black satin dress, real sleek. And the sash was lined with kind of a delft blue. And I think I had some other little touches of blue. And I really was swishing it around.

Lucian Coke was a friend of mine. And he was head of the Commonwealth college out in Arkansas, which was a progressive college for many years. It was like the one in Tennessee that Franz Daniel and his wife ran. At this party there was this very handsome guy, and his name was Dick Barry. And being a dashing widow [divorcee] I was introduced to him in order to interest him in something in this life so he wouldn't go off to Spain to fight Franco because that's what his plans were.

I don't dare let Dick get involved in that part of the story because he would tell of the two stools I was sitting on in a bar. You know, in those days, when you have a few drinks - and he had ridden his bicycle out to this place. But somehow he got in my car and we went off to a party. The Trotskyites were having some kind of a party and there was somebody there who knew about it. That's kind of vague. I do remember where I ended up that night, and I wasn't with Dick.

Bar: Anyway the next morning, somehow I got in touch with Dick. Then we had to go to Georgetown to get his bicycle.

It's very hard to analyze my feelings. I was interested in him, and I guess he was a little interested in me. This friend of his that he was living with worked for one of the bureaucracies, and he had to go up to Pennsylvania to look into something. So Hans and his girl and Dick and I went up to Pennsylvania and we were gone a couple or three days. And I couldn't really tell, like this book the First Night. The story I tell privately, I just couldn't, because it's so funny.

This was October, and the beauty of that country, the Fall and the apples and fruit stands everywhere. Of course I can't pass up a fruit-stand. And I remember our buying apples. And I think I'll tell this. I asked him to buy me a small bottle of whiskey because I said sometimes I can't sleep. [laughter] He said that was the most threatening thing. Here's this big female who was a little threat to him anyway. Of course he's not small. She kind of posed this, that it might not work so she'd better have an apple and some whiskey to put her to sleep. Needless to say, I slept well. That's as much as I would need to say about that.

Then I did drive him to Philadelphia, but didn't have time to drive him on to New York to take a boat and sail away. He was going off to fight Franco.

And I went back to Delaware and headed up a parade to support Roosevelt and get everybody to vote for Roosevelt.

Then he came back, and this is Dick's story about the problems he had in Spain. He went before the International Brigade was formed and he had no credentials. And he wrote to me and

Bar: asked if I could get any credentials for him from Browder. Earl Browder was head of the Communist Party at that time. Well, I didn't know him. I went in to see Browder, but I didn't know Dick well enough and I couldn't recommend him either. So he came back sometime in February or March. He was only gone about three months. And he did have some experience there, but he wasn't sure whether somebody might shoot him because he didn't have credentials. And he told the story of one man, an Italian who had been in one of Mussolini's jails, and he was the one who determined who could go to the front. As I say, that's Dick's story, and he wrote it up in the April 27, 1937 Saturday Evening Post, and it's on record.

Ken: That's good. Were you married then?

Bar: No. Then he started going around with me. He had an infection in his feet from walking over the Pyrenees, with dirty socks, I guess. Anyway, he ended up in the Marine Hospital in Baltimore. And I went to see him. This is interesting, because I've never considered myself an intellectual particularly. I had finished college. Anyway I went to visit him, and I was so amazed. Here was this guy that I thought was kind of a playboy and man of the world. He was reading Plutarch's Lives, and I was most impressed. And he has been reading Plutarch's Lives and that kind of thing ever since.

So this was the spring of thirty seven, and I managed to get pregnant. And it was no time to be pregnant. As I think now of these people who go through this terrible philosophical torture or whether or not to go ahead, I just didn't see any way to go ahead and have a child at that time. I didn't want to at all. So I managed to find - That's another story. I went

Bar: to an awful place, and then got out of it; and then found a doctor in New York that I could go to for the abortion. Then he started going around with me.

Ken: During this period, when you had this abortion, did you have, because of your religious background, any qualms about it?

Bar: As I say, there was no question in my mind. I just knew I couldn't go through with this. It just scared the hell out of my and I couldn't believe it because all the while I was married to Ivan, the five years I was married to him I never used contraceptives and I never got pregnant. And I remember when I was deciding to leave Ivan I thought I should have his child maybe because it would have been a nice kid. So I went to the doctor to why I didn't ever conceive and he gave this same old answer that they always do, that I had a tipped womb. So I thought I was running free and clear. And Dick had warned me. So then I learned about diaphragms and the nuisance of them.

Then this was thirty seven and you'll see Dick's pictures in all these unions activities because he was trailing me around, and I don't know how we ever didn't get a scandal.

And in the Fall we decided to go on what we called our hegira. And I had never been ~~in~~ beyond Denver. Richmond was as far South as I had been. So we discussed whether we would go to New Orleans or San Francisco. And I had my good Plymouth car that I had bought while I was working for the Amalgamated.

That's another thing I should have told about them. You know, at one of the Amalgamated conventions in Cleveland all the organizers got together and we were going to organize our own

Bar: union. You know - like in San Francisco where the unions can't stand to have their help organized.

Ken: What happened?

Bar: Oh, they didn't organize. I did tell how little they paid. Then I got the idea I could get expenses.

My friend Edy would always have the worst old wrecks of cars, and the cost of keeping them up was terrible. I couldn't stand to drive a rickety car. They didn't help me buy the car. There was no way I could fudge on expenses to buy the car. I just had to buy it on my own. She maybe got fifty dollars a month just to keep up some old wreck she was driving.

So I had this beautiful Plymouth. We have a pictureof us at the zero milestone in Washington, D.C., October 1st, 1937.

We were not married. Of course the young people now can't understand. Here it was forty years ago the same thing was happening [that people could go together without having that piece of paper.

So we started out. We stopped in Nebraska, and visited my family. And we stopped in Colorado - visited my family. And they were horrified. I remember my sister made us sleep in separate beds.

So then we -

Ken: [OK, Clemmie, where were you when you visited your sister?

Bar: When I visited my family, it was in Nebraska where I had grown up. This was in the Fall. And it seems to me that this was the time that Dick helped with shucking corn, going out with these wagons and horses. They had what they called a buckboard on the far side of the wagon. The farmers were handy with tools. They had a little sharp metal thing fastened on their thumb and they would pull the ear off the stalk and pull the shucks

Bar: off the husks, and throw them into the wagon all in one movement. Of course there were big contests of who could shuck the most corn. And of course there were a lot of puns because my maiden name was Shuck. Like the boys were teased about going "shucking" when they came to visit us. Now they use the word in another way.

My father had died in thirty three, I guess. Mother was still living when we stopped by. I don't remember how long we stayed - not very long, I think.

[Dick, from the other room, mentioned storm windows]

Then, when we visited my sister near Colorado Springs, they had been struggling farmers in Nebraska in 1920 when there was a terrible depression. And they moved to Colorado where the land had been homesteaded. It was about thirty miles East of Colorado Springs - desert land. It had been homesteaded, and the homesteaders gave it up because there was no way they could raise crops. Yet some sharp real estate operator got these struggling Nebraska farmers this land. And I don't remember how much my brother in law bought. It was something like twenty dollars an acre, which was very inexpensive. They tried to grow corn and the kind of things they grew back in Iowa and Nebraska, and they couldn't. It was a place of flash floods and horrible hailstorms. They finally got to growing pinto beans. I don't think they were into soy beans. But somehow they survived. And my brother in law died about a year ago, and he was eighty six years old. They were still on that same place. It is tree covered now, and the house is kind of modern. It is just amazing, the sixty years that he had lived there.

Anyway we stayed there a couple of days, I guess.

Bar: I remember the scary thing we did. It was getting near October. It was too late to go over the mountain passes. And we went over Rabbit's Ear and the snow was just pouring in it was snowing so. And all the cars were slipping and sliding and one car went off the side. We were going crabwise. I don't even remember if we had chains or not. I have a picture of us at the Continental Divide. Anyway this was quite an adventure for us. We kept going and stopped at Salt Lake and did the tour. And we stopped at Reno and we came on to San Francisco.

I'm so full of philosophical discussion. Somehow it seems to me here I should kind of review where I am to now. You see I would be thirty six years old. And what were my motivations. Why did I do what I did. I didn't resign from the Amalgamated when we came out here. I kept my bridge there. And Dick was trying to convince me. He had been a bum all his life, working here and there. He was really the Richard Halliburton of his day. If there was a mountain needed to be clumb, he clumb it. And he convinced me that I could live without having to have a regular job [phone rings]

One of the things, you see, that happens to you when you get old you get discursive. And there's so much in one's life that to try and boil it down into any kind of an entity is very difficult. And I was just thinking that Robert Louis Stevenson was the hippie of his generation when you read about him and his attitudes. And Herman Hesse. I am just getting acquainted with Herman Hesse because the kids have been reading him and I thought I should know more about it because I realize now why the young people like

Bar: him. Dick was a precursor. I don't think he was unwashed and shaggy, but he smoked pot. I remember when I first met him we had some pot. That was forty years ago. [laughs]. So he had a much more relaxed attitude about living than Ihad.

I'm going to just let the thoughts come as they come. When I think of the puritan ethic that I was brought up with. You see, I grew up in a Methodist Church with all those hang ups. You really needed to work. And of course you also had to save everybody. As I look back, and as I tell these stories,it doesn't seem like I was such a soul saver as I think I really must have been.

And I think what Dick was aiming at for me (he wasn't doing it consciously probably) was that I be my own person. And I remember that I hoped, when we came out here, that I would be known for just my own self; and that - you know we identify people by their professions. I wasn't a teacher, or a Y secretary, or a union organizer. I just wanted to be known for me. And you know that's almost impossible unless you do like the kids do now. You just drop out, and you are"me." But you start working and you become whatever that is that's laid on you as how you earn your living.

But to get back to sort of an evaluation I think I was such a doer. I think I was not a very thoughtful person. I am much more thoughtful now in these later years when I do think things through.

I know I used to fantazise, as I said earlier, about something I wanted to do. And, sure enough, I would do it. But there was ever a lot of thoughtful inner searching as to what I wanted to do. And things sort of just came, and they still do. You know, every thing

Bar: I have ever done seems in preparation for the next thing. It was always very logical. When I got into the whole left movement here in the City [San Francisco] it was a part of what I had been preparing for. And that seemed to be the next normal step. God forbid, I had to back up aways, but we'll get into that later.

Here we were. No jobs. A good automobile. Then Dick had a wreck with it. It was during some kind of a political unity thing we had going. He took a group to Los Angeles to a meeting. And on the way back they skidded off the road. When he came home he had almost broken his nose. His eyes and nose were black and blue, but I was much more worried because he had hurt my beautiful car.

It's very hard to pin down. I don't have the kind of insight to know the person I really was. I think I was a much more beautiful person than I really thought I was. I don't think I appreciated the kind of person that I was.

So here we are. We spent a week or so down in Los Angeles. Dick's sister and his mother were there. His mother was a funny person.She never wanted her children to marry, and she wouldn't see me at all. She was living with his sister. And the dear thing was a little bit off her rocker.

Then we came to San Francisco. I remember driving up the Coast and we found a live abalone that somebody had dropped along the road. I had never seen one, but Dick knew about them. First we drove out through the Marina because Dick said "Out where the World's Fair was in 1915, I'll bet there'll be motels out there." At that time San Francisco didn't permit motels to be built within the City limits, so we found a motel in Daly City.

Bar: You know we came across country, and we even bought an eight dollar radio in Denver - the first radio I had ever owned - and it cost us a little under one hundred dollars to drive all the way from Washington, D.C. Of course when we stopped at home we got some meals. I think it's fantastic when you stop and think of the difference. That was when people were earning five dollars a week.

Then there was the question of where to live.

Oh, I know, while we were in the motel he showed me how to slice this abalone. We didn't know about beating it, so we cooked this leather. When I think about how good abalone is, and I didn't know how to utilize that.
Anyway he had this terrible, terrible temperature. As we were coming up Bayshore we saw this big old General Hospital. And he said, "God forbid that we end up there." And sure enough, in a couple of days - He had had this temperature coming up the Coast, and it was so bad that he was going out of his head. And it was from that infection of his feet, and it got into the groin. You know, that's where it goes. So, oooooh, that was a hard time. We went to Marine General, rather San Francisco General, and he had a lot of papers from his boat, the Henry. I don't think I told anything about that.

Ken: No, you didn't.

Bar: When I met Dick he had this fifty foot boat that he said was a cross between a skipjack and a bugeye. Anyway, it had a motor and a lot of sails, and that's how we spent our week ends in the summer of 1937 with a lot of New Deal young people from Harvard and around.

So he had a lot of papers. He was the skipper of this boat. So when he showed these papers at the San Francisco General they said, you belong at the Marine Hospital, and was that

Bar: a lucky break! So we went to the Marine Hospital, and he was there fore ovar a month. He got out Christmas day.

In the meanwhile I was trying to find a place to live, and I found the most horrible little apartment that I couldn't stand up in, over on Stevenson Street behind the Salvation Army. It was just a little hole in the wall. That was so unsuitable. Then I don't know how I found this little place up on Alta Street. And it turned out we were only two doors from Charles and Helen Bratt. Charles was an old friend of Dick's from New York. It was just really great to have found them.So that's where we ended up living for about a year. Then we moved down to August Alley to that little shack we lived in for ten years.

So with Dick ending up in the hospital I had to get a job. So I answered an ad for "cultured woman with car" and it turned out it was a real estate outfit. God, if we could have bought some of that real estate. You sat in the rotunda of the Emporium. I had a desk there with the real estate sign out. Little did I know that twenty years later I would be selling real estate. And you were to catch victims and take them down to San Mateo County and show them lots. And you couldn't give it away then. So what happened is I wasn't making anything there.

And there is where the union came in good for me - the Clerk's Union [Retail Clerks International Protective Association #1100] was just being organized, and no one was allowed to work in the Emporium, even in this catagory, without having union protection. And there was no way this could be hooked up. So the Emporium had seen my bright and shining light and I was hired to demonstrate Minwax. And to this day I still use Minwax. It's a combination wax and stain. I had a brown linen smock, it was so pretty.

Bar: So I wore this brown linen smock and I became an expert on how to refinish furniture. They had an unfinished furniture department at that time, and I worked in connection with that. So I did that until (I don't know the time span. it must have been very short) they put me as a regular salesperson. I went to selling flatware and silver in the silverware department. And do you know, I had never been laid off or fired from a job. And the day before Christmas I was laid off. Dick was in the hospital. And, my god, that was the most demoralizing thing to me. Of course it was no reflection on me at all. It was simply that the Christmas help was laid off.

Anyway, I was rehired right away. I've forgotten where else I worked at the Emporium and Macy's. I did tell about working at Macy's in New York. That's always a place you can go back to between jobs.

By this time I had gone to some party for the People's World. And I was meeting people who worked around, like in the State Relief Administration. Someone told me about jobs for social workers. And although in those days there were no degrees given in social work like there are now - now you go back and get your Masters in social work. I just majored in sociology. Anyway, I remember going down to apply. I didn't even have a nickle for carfare, Anyway, it was raining and I thought, oh gee, I am just going to be so soaked I won't be presentable to go down and ask for this job. And you know it's funny, Lucy, I don't remember feeling demoralized. I don't think I was because the world was my apple and things were good. So I stopped at Bouquet Cohen's, you know those cigar stores on the corners, and I borrowed a nickle from the

Bar: guy there to take the street car down to Geary Street to get to this job. And I remember the woman that I interviewed, and she was so impressed with my background, the Y and union organizing, the perfect background for what was needed. And of course as a social worker you were paid a hundred and twenty five dollars a month. And that was a lot more than you would get if you were applying to get on relief.

This must have been along in January or February, 1938 when I started working there. When I think of what people were given - First I was an intake worker where you went out and visited people to determine their eligibility. I remember one old couple that I followed through (you made a once a month visit, or something like that) and they were always in bed. As soon as they got their check they bought gin. They were real fragile, sensitive and very sophisticated people.They were not people who didn't know.

I remember we always had to trace down, get all the data on where they came from, where they were born, and so on. And this dear couple, they gave me all sorts of places to find. Of course they were doing just like I was, you know. Thank god I didn't have to fillthat out for a marriage license. Anyway I think of the people who were alcoholics. And I was very idealistic still at that time. I used to think that they could get over it. I didn't realize how sick they were. As soon as they got their little checks they would use it up drinking. And there were lots of women I'm sure who were prostitutes. At least they earned a little that way, and you weren't able to trace it. You were supposed to trace any income. And boy, when you figured they were getting something like thirty dollars a month for room and food, I didn't.

Barry:

Bar: And I remember the families that you could issue special orders for. And I remember the Workers Alliance. And I really helped those people all I could. Of course there was the Unemployed Council as well as the Workers Alliance, and I would do amything I could to help. And no one who didn't live through that time can realize how poverty stricken people were. And I'm sure it is going on right now. There wasn't such affluence all over as there is now, high living, the hotels and suburbia.

The way that job ended was when I was very active in organizing what is now the State, County and Municipal Workers Union. I was the volunteer organizer although I was working full time. I remember coming home - and by this time I had found the left and I was being involved in that too - I would come home, and I would have signs all over the house, "Slow down, be quiet." I was doing this full time job, and then at night I was helping in organizing the union.

What happened then is we had the Jack Tenny, Sam Yorty Un-American Committee in Sacramento. And so they were out beating the bushes for - it wasn't really the reds they were after. It was they didn't want this union organized because we were defending not only our own selves, but we were defending the people who were poor. I remember a friend of mine was a party organizer out in the Mission, and she was working for the State Relief Administration. She was never called. She wasn't activein the union. Anyway - so then we were called before this committee and we didn't know - we were the pioneers of this. We didn't know how to take the Fifth, or anything. Dear old Hal Sawyer was our lawyer and he had us say, "We decline to answer on advice of counsel," because if you answered one question, then you know you really

Bar: were in trouble. And I remember they sat on kind of a rostrum above us, and we had to sit below them. And there were five of them yelling questions at you. It was really a terrible thing. I remember feeling very smug in saying "I decline to answer on advice of counsel." But it was just really scary, and we were angry. And you know, one of them said to me, "Did Joe Stalin send you from the University of Denver over here to organize these workers?"- and such stupid things as that.

Sam Yorty was one of the leading ones. I hope that he has had his comeuppance. I think he is now a radio or TV commentator, or something. I don't know what happened to Tenny. I think he died.

So then, of course, when we declined to answer they had no way of firing us for that. So the Legislature passed a bill denying the State the right to pay us. So that's how they were able to fire us. I don't remember all the details, but we were all fired.

And you know there were about twelve social workers in Stockton who did six months in jail on the basis of this. Old Matt Brady was the District Attorney in San Francisco,and he was a good union man. So he didn't indict us. So we didn't go to jail for contempt of this committee, but we could have if he had been a mind to do it. And that is the first time I was blacklisted.

Do you know that during the war I got this telegram from the nationaal Y.W.C.A. They were going through their lists of old Y secretaries to go to work for the U.S.O. I was very excited because Dick was gone to sea and I was footloose and I thought how much fun it would be to go to work for the U.S.O. And do you know I couldn't even work for the U.S.O. as a volunteer, let alone

Bar: on the paid staff because of the blacklist from the Yorty committee. And that stayed with us all. You couldn't get jobs.

And I finally passed the Civil Service for the City of San Francisco as a social worker. And then later some of them finally did get in. But by that time I was interested in something else.

It was funny during this period Dick and this friend who was a travel agent for the American Express was laid off. He and Dick had gone to the races one day. Dick had a system and was perfectly happy playing at home. But Hal had a little money, so they went to the races one day and got cleaned out.

Dick remembered how, in Washington, D.C., some friends of his had made a good thing out of a rooming house. So Hal belonged to the Junior Chamber of Commerce and had a lot of connections. So they found this cute old house. I guess it had been a whorehouse at one time. It was on Fella Place. They painted it and refurbished it. The highest rent was five fifty a week. They furnished it with white numdah rugs and maple furniture and really did a beautiful job. San Francisco was just being flooded with young women coming in.

Dick and Hal ran it, and they just did fine, listened to the girls trouble and so on. Then they went off to sea and left me running it. And that was not my cupe of tea. I didn't mind emptying the waste baskets (they had a dommunity kitchen) and keeping things tidy.

Ken: Why did they ship out?

Bar: They opened this little rooming house January 1st, 1940. I guess by this time I was back at the Emporium after we were fired from the State Relief Administration.

By this time we were living in August Alley in a thirty-day house, they called it. They were

Bar: They were built right after the earthquake and were put up very hurriedly. When we found this house in 1938 it had burlap all over the walls and layers and layers of linoleum over the floors. And when we took these layers up we found newspapers dating back to 1906. We stripped the whole thing, knocked out the partitions, so we had one big room, a little bedroom and a little kitchen, and the whole basement was open downstairs. It had a dirt floor. When we were fixing the house we slept in the basement and it was full of those good old San Francisco fleas. We were just wild. You would wakeup in the morning and step on this old carpet we had on the dirt and your legs would be black with fleas in a minute! We had cats too. We were cat people.

You asked me why they left Fella Place. It was after Pearl Harbor, in 1941.

It was funny, in 1939 during the Czech invasion, Dick had said, "You know they were sort of merchant seamen officers during World War I so I am going to get my license because it looks like we are going to have another war." So he and Harold both had their officers licenses. So, of course, they got a job right away and were off to war. And I was heartbroken.

You were asking me a while ago about the relationship of Dick and me, and me as a woman. I was always very free and Dick had a very good attitude about women. I would say he probably is the least chauvinistic man. When I was working as a social worker and he was home writing (because he used to sell articles and stories; he had an agent in New York and he did very well) he always did the cooking. He was a great chef. His agent's secretary was a woman we knew and she didn't approve of our left leanings. I remember she wrote

Barry: Dick once and said if he's keep Lenin's whiskers and John D. Lewis' eyebrows out of his stories they might sell. [laughter].

I remember one time bringing this social worker friend home - two women came home with me. Dick had made pie and had cooked a fancy dinner. And this was just our kind of living. If he were working and I wasn't, the money was always joint. And I think I probably handled the money more than he did. It seems to me I always was the one who handled the money and paid the bills and was sort of the bookkeeper. It's very interesting. I know I must have been as suppressed as any other women.

When I was a social worker in the Relief Administration I became a Supervisor and I had men working under me, and I got one hundred and fifty dollars a month for being supervisor. So that I never was really conscious in the way I can be now because I didn't look at the larger picture. In my own little realm I was very independent. Dick and I had a very equal relationship. Yet when I think about our relationship - we used to go to a lot of parties and a lot of people wouldn't go with their own spouses, or they wouldn't go home with them. Dick and I always went together, and we always went home together. We sort of belonged to each other. Through the years it has always been Dick and Clemmie. In fact his little grand niece called us "ClemmieDick". That was one word. She thought that was my name and she thought that was his name. And I don't think I'm romanticizing that. I think it was really true.

When he went away, the first time he left, I was just so heartbroken, and I was crying and crying. He had taken his old dufflebag and had gone off to the ship and was gone.

Barry: That's when I was taking care of the rooming house. I thought it was really awful that he went away. But I was lucky he didn't go away like the men in the army, because he came home.

Ken: Would you equate this freedom you had with the fact that you were a working person, or was it your political awareness. How do you account for your freedom that not too many women had during that period?

Bar: I think it was just me. I think as a child I had some sort of independent spirit. Like my father said he hated to see Clemmie coming to him for something because he knew she was going to get it. I think I was a free spirit. I really do. It didn't come out of any philosophical belief. And it is probably that I found myself in the places I found myself philosophically because I was that kind of a person. I think a lot of times you are there because you are that kind of a person, and not you are that kind of a person because you are there.

Ken: We you working then?

Bar: No. I just took care of that and was in North Beach.

Ken: Did you become a Communist then, or were you a Communist before?

Bar: It's funny. I think I told you I went to New York and tried to sign up, and they sent me - because I had come in because of Ivan and my interest in Russia, in the Soviet Union. Of course a lot of people never considered that I could be a very good Communist because I didn't come out of the workers and out of the struggle. I had never struggled. I came in on an intellectual basis. Certainly in the thirties there was no where else to turn. That was when the party grew because it looked as though we weren't going to make it as a capitalist system. Of course I

Bar: was praising Roosevelt a while back; but it was Roosevelt that saved it. There's no question about it. Let's see. Where were we?

Ken: I wanted to know when you did join the Communist Party.

Bar: It was in New York. I finally did because I remember they thought they had really gotten a great find. [outside noise. turned off tape temporarily]. And I was signed up by Earl Browder.

When I look back I was in the Communist Party just like I was a Y secretary or a union organizer. It was sort of a doing good. I was never a revolutionary in the sense of the way the kids are now.

You know, I have a copy of an article that Art Hoppe wrote. It was during the sixties. It is so funny. Here are these kids being called before the Un-American Committee, and they are building bombs and so, but this committee is still looking for communists. And these kids are so disdainful - "Oh, those old people. We met one the other day, and he's so beat up and old."

I never was active back East. When I was in New York I went into the office, but I was not working under any kind of direction.

Ken: When you came out here, did you get yourself tied up?

Bar: I wasn't going to. But Dick was in the hospital. I guess it was at the time the People's World was being launched. This was 1938. So I think I went to some party (there were so many parties). I got involved with the Green Street Players. They were putting on all kinds of really good theatre. So, little by little, I got involved.

Bar: The funny thing was though (and I am not sure I will mention names) one of our old friends who was always a little paranoid about people was very skeptical of me and of Dick because he was not in the International Brigade. He went to Spain and came back all on his own.

I don't remember when I became active in San Francisco. It was during the war.

Ken: When you gave up the boarding house, what did you do?

Bar: I was working in the left then, in North Beach. I think I was working at the Emporium during that period. But there weren't many jobs. I never did go out and work in the war industry like other people did.

Ken: Let's leave it off here. I think the next logical step is your activity within the communist party, and your leadership in the communist party, because you were a full time functionary.

Bar: Just that little bit.

Ken: I think it was quite a long time.

End of tape

Fourth Interview - November 2, 1975

Ken: We want to start out now with what you did during World War II. The old question, do you remember December 7th?

Bar: Oh yes - very much. I think I have to preface today's remarks. I was having difficulty with the tension in my throat because of the tension in my life right now. So my voice doesn't sound like me. I have such clear, bell-like tones usually, you know [laughter].

December 7th, 1941. We were living in August Alley. That was the period in which Dick and Harold Seal had this girls' rooming house. There were war things, signs around at that time, because (Fred, I hope you don't mind my mentioning your name) at that time we had a delightful young Lieutenant who now lives in Mill Valley. But Fred was in the army. I guess he had been in ROTC in college. He was from Montana. We were fond of Fred. He was just a beautiful young man. And Fred and Harold were in our house when the news came on the radio. I remember this terrible shock. I just don't remember what we all did that particular time. But I remember what I did that afternoon.

I immediately contacted the Communist Party to see what we could do to "protect our country." And as I recall, just as we were always organized to rally to the cause, we immediately cranked out a leaflet.

By the way this is interesting because during the "Yanks are Not Coming" period we were under attack because - we never made our own decisions, it seems. We were always taking the decisions of someone else. Anyway, we were terribly under attack because of our slogan, "The Yanks aren't coming." I remember all the mimeographs were hidden around. And,

Bar: my god, the reams of paper that were probably rotted because they were stored around in everybody's basements. So here now was a chance for us because our country had been attacked and we could rally to support. And I remember that night getting out some kind of a leaflet. And since we lived in North Beach that was my baliwick. We plastered the whole area. I don't know what the leaflet said, but I'm sure it was very erudite and told all about how we should support our country.

And of course that was the beginning of the mobilization. It was also the beginning of the mobilization of Dick and Harold. They were both licensed officers in the marchant marine. Dick had actually done it because he saw the war coming. I think I mentioned it before.

Everybody just turned around. Isn't it horrible that in a war period like that there is such unity,no matter who you disagreed with before.

Living in North Beach where there were a lot of fascists, and that one newspaper on the corner, I think they were fascist [referring to L'Italia]. Down on Columbus Avenue there was this wonderful anti fascist Italian who published a little anti fascist paper. And he was always in the doghouse because the major portion of the Italian community was supporting Mussolini.

I remember, I was the best spy hunter in the world. I remember one time seeing a big truck with New Jersey licenses om it backed up to Fugazi Hall taking out a lot of papers and material. Being the good soldier I was, I called the FBI [laughs]. I don't think anything

Bar: ever came of it now knowing what the FBI was up to. It really became a separation of course, and then a lot of Italian people did go to concentration camps like the Japanese did.

Ken: Did they? I didn't know that.

Bar: Yes, and I'm trying to think of the names.

Ken: There's one question I want to ask - you were a member of the Communist Party at this time and you mentioned the "Yanks are Not Coming." Then when December 7th came and the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor the party policy changed directly from that to support of the war. How did you as a person feel about this turnabout?

Bar: I thinkI was probably very relieved because, as you recall, there was a big split in the party during that period when England was being bombed. I know, our Yanks are Not Coming policy was just before Russia was invaded . That was it. Stalin and Hitler had signed a pact. Unfortunately, I don't know if it's true or not, I had a feeling and we used to discuss it. We didn't make our policies on the needs of our own country. Many times we may have accepted policies that had been laid down by the Soviet Union for their country. That is, the local party did. I don't know if that's true or not. I feel that's probably true. And I remember when I began to feel revolt against "Father Stalin", and I felt that way before he died. I was very irked about some things.And there was a division. I remember when Hitler was invading the lowlands,Belgium,and bombing the hell out of Britain we were saying the Yanks aren't coming. We didn't want to get into this war because the Soviet Union was not into it. And Stalin had made a pact that Hitler would not invade the Soviet Union. Stalin was pretty dumb. He got sucked into it, and the first

Bar: thing you know this was June of 1941 when Hitler's panzers and trucks and all the might he had went rolling over Europe. Czechoslavokia had already gone. That was the Chamberlain period when we were going to have "peace in our time."

Ken: The policy changed at that time, and not on December the 7th.

Bar: That's right. Now Hitler paid no attention to this pact and the Russians were in this war to save themselves. I saw a piece of old war film the other night of the various battles that had turned Hitler back, and one of them was the battle of Stalingrad. I really get gooseflesh when I think about that still. Actually that's when the party policy changed when the Soviet Union was invaded. Then, of course, when we were invaded by the Japanese we were in head over heels.

Ken: How did this change your life?

Bar: Well, I think I was kind of glad to be going with the mainstream for a while. I was going upstream all the time [laughs] and now I was back with my countrymen and not being an iconoclast. I still would not change my life in the thirties when I was in the party because our country was just like it is today. It was in such a mess. You have to find something that can give you hope - that there is some way you can get something better. Of course now it is even worse than it was in the thirties. I don't regret that part of it at all because It was a thoughtful person and the people that were in were thoughtful. Even though we tended to accept policies that we had not formulated, we went through the motions. I think that was probably one of the hardest things for most of us to

Bar: accept. When you asked me how it changed my life, it changed it in this respect that Dick and Harold went off to sea, and they left in January or February of 1942.

There was nobody to mind this rooming house except me, and that was not my forte. I think I said that on the other tape.

Then I became very active in North Beach, and as you remember, afterwards, when we were talking about what our role was in the war, I remember someone saying that we gave more blood and raised more money for bonds than anybody.

Everyone in the party gave so much and so many of the men were killed. And they did heroic things. Some of them came back with great lots of medals because I think they gave a little bit extra. I don't know. Maybe that's just my memory.

I think of this one guy, Morrie, who was killed and his wife was working in the State [Communist Party] office - and I remember that when she got word that he was killed in the Battle of the Bulge she came in to comfort the rest of us, and we were feeling that she needed to be comforted. And I think probably like when I was a kid in nineteen sixteen and seventeen I was wishing it would be over, yet it seemed the stakes were so high. When I think back now of the millions of Jews that were killed by Hitler, whatever we did was not enough to destroy it. And I guess there is no way to destroy that kind of violence except with violence.

You know I don't think I ever said this, but I signed my first peace petition in nine teen twenty three when I was first on the campus. You know, we were not going to have war anymore.

Bar: We would not participate in war any more. We were pacifists. God, when you think of how many petitions we signed not to have war! Then when war comes along - except for the Korean war and the Vietnam war, I never saw any sense in those, and I'm sure history is going to bear me out. But with the war on Hitler, it shouldn't have had to happen because we shouldn't - maybe this is the kind of thing I should say - if the United States hadn't built up Germany after world war I (just like we've done now after world war II) into a huge military power again because it was to our capitalist advantage to have Germany as a big industrial nation. When I say we couldn't do anything else because Hitler was there, well we shouldn't have ever let Hitler get there, but we did. And it's just the kind of thing we keep doing now. We support the dictators in countries.

God, old Franco's taking a long time to die. And we supported him even when the rest of Europe wasn't. And you remember a couple of weeks ago when he was shooting some of the terrorists there, it <u>really</u> upset the rest of Europe. Our govnerment is still with Franco. And we've always supported the oppressors of the people where it is Latin America, or whether it is Asia, like Chiang Kai Shek. We didn't need World War II, but he had it because we hadnot done the previous things to avoind it. There - that was a speech. [laughter].

Ken: Let's get back to you as a person. You did work full time for the Communist Party during the war, didn't you?

Bar: No. It was after. I was a volunteer worker in North Beach.

Ken: Oh, I thought you were up in the headquarters.

Bar: No. That was after forty-four, and it was a very brief time. It was after Teheran. Browder's

Bar: line was - Teheran, by the way, was when Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin met in Teheran and they made this settlement about what the world was going to be like afterwards.

By the way, there is one thing I think I need to say though. We've been watching Jennie on Television. Know, the mother of Winnie Churchill. And that poor dumb kid, what a bad time they gave him. I didn't realize his background was like that. As somebody was saying the other day, there is no man who had wasted his physical talents more than Winnie with his fifteen cigars a day. I remember, right after nineteen forty one when Hitler attacked Russia, how scared I was. Churchill was to make an announcement. He was to make a speech. And I fully believed at that time that he was going to turn the war with all the forces of Europe against the Soviet Union. I really believed that. I think I cried and cried when he came out that he was against Hitler and that the Soviet Union would be our ally. I hate to think about what would have happened had it gone the other way.. So the old guy did have his buttons. I think history proves that what he did was right.

But this meeting in Teheran, it was just like detente now. It's really same same thing because capitalists and communists were going to live together in peace. And we were no longer a Communist Party. We were a Communist Political Association that was going to educate people.

I can still see that convention where we became the Communist Political Association. And I can still see dear Anita Whitney, that beautiful old Wellesly graduate, the most ladylike lady that we ever had. She was State

Bar: Chairman of the Party. And she was never one who wanted us to cease being a Party. And, of course, there was a big division at the top. William Z. Foster and Browder were at loggerheads. And somehow I remember the little magazine, Political Affairs, which was the organ where the line was laid out. And I remember when you used to do an educational using that as a background for a branch meeting, not that you were doing any extra thinking of your own. You were just laying out what this article said. I can think of some things there that really would be funny to talk about later.

Ken: Let's talk about you now. What did you personally do during the war. You were alone as a lot of women were. How did you function during the war?

Bar: Well, I worked raising money for bonds. You see, I didn't get rid of the rooming house until later, so I wasn't able to go to work in a war industry. And I don't know that I would have anyway. A lot of women did go and work as welders or whatever. I don't think that would have ever been my forte although I am a physical person in many ways. The reason I explain this is that I was elected as secretary-treasurer to this Communist Political Association, this educational association. Then I was working full time for twenty five dollars a week. I think it was twenty five dollars a week. Then you are absorbed in meetings and meetings, and meetings. Somehow that period does not feel important to me. I only remember that the man who nominated me for this position said, "Clemmie is just as much at home with the bankers as she is with the workers." And that I would be the ideal kind of person for the job. And I remember that didn't please me,

Bar: but it probably was true. So then I worked for the Red Cross. And I am trying to think of an organization in North Beach, some war oriented thing. I worked purely as a volunteer, and it was forty-four at least when this Communist Political Association was formed. It was very short lived because then the Duclos letter came out pointing up the error of our ways.

Then I went to work for the People's World in nineteen forty six, and I was there not even a year. I was supposed to be circulation manager, but there was no way. You know, you didn't function like that. The circulation depended entirely on the Party cadres to get subscriptions. It was a very unhappy time for me. I was so relieved when Dick's ship came to Baltimore. And I went back to Nebraska to meet him, and we visited there in forty six. Then that fall, because we were being evicted out of our little home in August Alley, we moved to Mill Valley. And I was so relieved to get out of all this political mess.

Somehow as I look back now it seemed to me to be the most forward looking thing I could do at that time. I was always a changer and a believer. And I guess we made a few dents, but now it's hard to see where they were.

Ken ; What was your life style during this period before we go on into something else.

Bar: You know we never called it life style in those days. That's a new term. We were free spirits. We lived in this little tiny house in North Beach that we paid thirteen dollars a month for, and Megan paid twelve dollars next door. Then we had a lease and then rent controls came along. So the rent was frozen at thirteen dollars a month. We lived there for ten years. And I think we considered that

Bar: we were sort of Bohemian. We bought wine at that nice little winery (didn't you say it was still on Powell when you brought some over one day). It was beautiful red wine for forty cents a gallon.

We had lots of parties. I remember one Labor Day after the Labor Day March (that was just before the war, I guess) we came back to August Alley for a party. And I don't remember how we got so many people in that house. We played a game, what was that Dick, Hiass, where you marched around in a circle and everyone wacked the other guy. I thought the place was going to fall down. I remember I baked a lot of beans. So we were kind of a place where people came, and we had a lot of fun.

Then when Dick would come home (although I may have had a little extra curricular love life when he was gone, it is very limiting when you live in a small house and have lots of Italian neighbors, and they were the old time Italians.)

By the way, one of the things I remember that was cute, one of them was quoted as saying, "You know, the Barry's get along so well. He never hits her." [laughter]. Well, if he ever hit me once, that would be the day. Our relationship was so much different than the Italian woman to her husband.

Liquor was scarce, and I remember I used to go up to Ollie's up there on the corner at Mason and Green (he had a little grocery store there), and whenever he got any little half pints of liquor in, I would buy them all up for when Dick came home, because then we would have a party. I remember once when he came in I think I scrounged and had one fifth of gin or something. Dick, as ship's office on the ship, was usually the ship's doctor.

Bar: And as Chief Officer he had access to the medicines. So this time he brought home a bottle of one hundred and fifty proof alcohol. He was out in the kitchen making the martinis, and because we were so short of gin, so he spiked the martinis (and those funny little steps there that go down to the alley) people were falling out of the house [laughs] and they didn't know what hit them. That isn't a very pleasant story, but it was funny at the time. In those days it seemed like we drank an awful lot of liquor. Thank god we are past that now. As for our life style, I think that was it. We were a very free wheeling people.

There was a whole group, the artists, the Green Street Theatre group, there were a whole bunch of people there at that time as free wheeling as a lot of the kids are now. The only thing is we weren't phorny oriented. You know the pornography we have now, I still have a little puritanical reaction to it. Dick and I, when he was home, never mixed our love life with anybody else. We never swapped around. If people did, they didn't do it so obviously.

As far as gay people, I remember two beautiful persons who were gay. And there was a question as to whether we should allow gay people in the party because they might not be trustworthy. And I remember the pain of these discussions. I don't remember what the upshot was - whether they were out. If they did have to leave, I don't remember.

Food was very inexpensive, even during the war. I remember this Chinese butcher shop where we would get pork shoulders for thirteen cents a pound, and this wonderful fish market at the Buon Gusto where you could get fresh fish

Bar: that dame right in. Although when we first came and didn't have any money I remember going to the Parisian Bakery and buying a day old loaf of bread for a nickel. Then we would buy a couple of pounds of what Dick would callMichigan beans or Navy beans and some salt pork and some forty cent wine, and we had a wonderful meal. We used that five cent bread for a long time. All you did was re-heat it and it was just as good as the day before.

Ken: Ok. Now the war is over, you have been kicked out of your home in August Alley. What happened then?

Bar: This is kind of a neat real estate story, but I'll make it quick. We could have bought the four units behind us in this little shack for five thousand dollars. But we were not going to perpetuate North Beach slums. We were very pure. So the people who bought it bought it for investment, and if they weren't going to live in it, then they couldn't oust us. Then Mrs. Gump, one of the Gump's, bought it, and she paid ninety five hundred for it. It had finally gotten up to that. She still was using it for investment and couldn't make us move. Finally an Army WAC came along and she paid twelve five for it and because she was going to live in it and fix it up, we had to move. The end of the story is that about twenty years later they sold it for ninety thousand dollars, this whole section, without much change. Now there is a not very big apartment there. It seems to me they paid an awful lot for the land for the size of the building they built there.

Bar: So then we moved to Mill Valley. I remember, though, a lot of people were critical of us that we were leaving everything and moving across the bridge. [laughs]

I'll have to tell you also that we were always very careful of our finances. And even after Dick had gone to sea and was making good money - because when I worked for the State I was making one hundred and twenty five dollars a month and a hundred and fifty when I became a supervisor. Then I worked at Macy's and the Emporium off and on, and I think I got a dollar and eleven cents an hour, maybe less. Anyway, I remember Dick saying one time that the way he changed his standard of living was that he used two pieces of toilet paper now instead of one. And we were never bar people much. We'd buy a bottle and take it home. We were not penurious, but we were careful.

There was something there, and I got side tracked.

Ken: People looking down on you because you moved?

Bar: Right. I don't know what the point was. The same thing happened when we moved to Westwood.

This was after we had integrated Homestead Valley by selling to Black people. We were criticized because we were moving to Westwood which was a lily white town. Somebody said, "You are just going away and leaving it all." And I answered, "There are people there."

We paid two thousand dollars for this old house on Cascade Way, which is on the Dipsea Trail. It was up a hundred and fifty wooden steps. It was December and the sun was back behind the hill, and we should have known better.

Bar: It looked so much like August Alley. It was singled. It had a tenant. That was another thing.

I remember telling about the Communist magazine, Political Affairs. There was a guy Bittleman who was the great economic expert. And he had forecast that there would be a big depression after World War II. And we were basing our lives on this erudite guy. And I remember Dick saying "If Bittleman's wrong I'll never read the damn thing again." And he couldn't have been any wronger. Anyway we bought this old place with a rental unit thinking everything would b e fine.

There is something in Dick and me that is so creative, that whatever we saw, it had to be improved. Anyway, we got this old house in the Redwoods, and it was on a twenty five foot lot. But we didn't know any better. But there was a lot on either side of us and we were able to buy those, so it was a seventy five foot lot. We made bricks out of the hillside. We got into blue clay, even in that redwood area. We hade a beautiful fireplace out of these doby bricks.

It was really a neat time. Dick was still going to sea when he wanted to. So we just took this time off and remodled this old house.

I don't know how this happened that I met this real estate man. He wanted me to come and sell realestate. His intentions were not anything more than just admiring me. Of course that was a break for me because I had just come out of the People's World, and I was blacklisted and I hadn't even thought of trying to get a job as a social worker. We thought Dick could always go to sea. That turned out to not be true either.

Bar: It was a beautiful time to sell real estate. You were really finding homes for people. GI's were coming home from the war and wanting to find a place in the country to raise their kids. It was a very warm and happy time, and it was just right for me. We didn't have a new car yet, but through an ad we found an old Studebaker, and I used to take people out to show them real estate in this funny old car.

We moved in the new place in 1946 and all of 1947 we just worked like beavers fixing it up. I wouldn't go home to lunch because of the stairs. It was just too much. I guess it must have been the spring of forty eight that I saw this house down in Homestead where it was completely down hill to get to the house, and the garage was up at the top. And it was in a charming setting - trees and a big orchard, and a lot of level land which by the time I left in ten years I had made it a lot leveler. I think it was the Fall of forty eight that we moved down there.

This was a wonderful place for parties, and every year we had big birthday party for Dick. In nineteen fifty seven, the last party we had, there were almost a hundred people there.

Dick was just fabulous. By this time he was carpentering. By this time he had been blacklisted by the Coast Guard and couldn't renew his Master's license because he was married to me. Harold Seale with,whom we had a very tenuous relationship at that time, couldn't renew his license because he knew us. He had to either drop us - That was the McCarthy period. Dick was young enough to get in the carpenters Union. He was a good workman.

Bar: So the selling of real estate went on.

Ken: You mentioned before that as a real estate person you were involved in integrating Mill Valley. You want to tell about that now?

Bar: This was nineteen fifty two. We had bought some additional land behind our house. We wanted a little more space. The cottage that had formerly belonged to our house had been sold off and we wanted it back. Anyway, I don't know how much land we bought. It was very steep and it had a lot of eucalyptus and cypress on it. We bought it and whatever it was we paid two thousand dollars for it from the neighbor who owned it. Maybe it was an acre and a half, but it was very steep.

So Dick was in the Carpenters Union and he knew these two Black men. A lot of the white carpenters were interested in buying, but they never did. One day, dear old Pete Dreyfus was a contractor, and these two men were working for him. And Pete came over and asked us would we be willing to sell this land to Roscoe and Dave. Of course Dick came in and asked me, and I said, "Well you know all hell will break loose, but if they want it, who are we to not sell it to them." We agreed, and the crazy thing was that we sold this big hunk of land for what we still owed on it, which was twelve hundred dollars. These men each paid six hundred dollars for over a half acre.

But you know, we never were money oriented. We were very busy about living and somehow money was not - yet if Dick hadn't gotten sick we would have made it for a lot longer than we have.

So we did, and one of our nice neighbors (she was not anti-Black at all - we didn't say Black in those days. It was nineteen fifty two) I don't know why she did it. She claims it was

Bar: not with any malice. She went into my bosses office. We didn't handle it through his office. Dick handled all the papers at the title company. I was not involved in it through my broker. And she asked him about seeing these black people down on this land. Then it just happened that I had a terrible cold one morning, so I called in to say I couldn't come to work. And he told me I never needed to come to work again because he heard what we had done. We had sold to black people. And that was the beginning of it.

We had breakfast every Tuesday morning. They still do, all the realtors in the Country. It is funny, just before this (it was on Constitution Day or some such) they had a speaker on whatever the Amendment is that allowed the black people their rights. And by this time I think there were some rumblings that the FHA [Federal Housing Administration] was going to make some rulings that you couldn't have an FHA loan if you didn't let anybody use it. The man had no sooner finished his speech on the Bill of Rights and so on until the realtors began talking about how to get around it. I know my boss would tell even Orientals if they came to the office, if I didn't get to them first, that "You wouldn't be happy living in Mill Valley." So, of course, a black person wouldn't even dare come to a real estate office. So the news was out. And I had this horrible cold. It was not a cold from this. It really was a bug.

By this time my boss had married a woman, and she went around to all the realtors and asked what they should do to Clemmie. She had broken this gentlemen's agreement. I saw by the paper this morning that someone called it a gentle person's agreement. That was anything

Bar: but a gentle person's agreement! Most of them said "You've got to get rid of her." I never wanted to be a broker. I could have had a broker's license, but I didn't want to. I didn't want that responsibility. So the only way you could be a real estate salesman was to have your license in some broker's office. One guy said, "Let her go for a while until it blows over." I don't mind saying it. I was one of the best salesmen in the whole county. I extended myself always to people. The most expensive house I sold was the one that Pete and Marion Owens bought that Joe Stein had built right after the war. He and Bob Royston had built these two model houses out of prefabricated concrete in contemporary design. God, they paid all of twenty one thousand for that house. Now a hundred thousand would not buy it. It was small, but it was beautiful. So the houses were mainly selling for ten or twelve thousand. I wasn't making that much money. Probably five thousand a year was high. That was big money. Of course Dick as a carpenter was making fair money.

What happened was, there was a Council for Civic Unity in the City that had a branch in Mill Valley. And some of the church people took up the cause, but there was no way to get me back. I could have put my license in the State office had I known it. I could have put it on ice. So I lost my license.

Meanwhile we had bought a little piece of property out in Tam [Tamalpais] Valley. We paid four thousand dollars for it, I think. And we had used up every speck of cash we had floating around. And Dick had fallen through

Bar: a roof and hurt his back. He was incapacitated. It was just Christmas time then, so I went back and worked for my old friend Macy's as a salesperson.

The thing was, that when the black people, the two families, bought this land there was this terrific job of cleaning it up with those huge trees, and clearing it and getting ready to build. And we had neighborhood parties to help. All the neighbors cooperated. It was a beautiful experience because it was only the real estate people who were the bummers on it. One neighbor objected. She said, "You didn't ask us." And I said, Well, if we were selling to white people, would we have asked you." Later on she and one of the black women used to walk their dogs together on Montford Avenue. She had objected a little. She said, "I was never so ashamed of anything in my entire life that I was not too friendly in the beginning."

Then the McIntosh family couldn't have childred, so they adopted these two beautiful children. Then she died of cancer. Then Roscoe married again and now has a child of his own. He was the most lovable beautiful man. He always stuttered when he talked to me. He never would call us anything but Mr. and Mrs.Barry. To everybody else we were Dick and Clemmie. He kept a real formal relationship with us. Dave was much freer, but that's another story of their lives. They built the best houses in the area.

I remember one neighbor we weren' sure about. He worked as a guard for the S.P. [Southern Pacific] in theCity, and he came home about eight o'clock in the morning. So when we had the first big pour for the foundations, these huge forms were built because it was hillside. Everybody was rallying, because if you've ever worked with wet cement coming out of one of those chutes of those big cement

Bar: trucks you have to work fast to get that cement pushed to where it needs to be. So everybody would rally. And this man, I can't think of his name, and we were wondering about him. We weren't sure. She was a teacher and we hadn't had too close connection with them. And, by golly, he had come directly from work as a night watchman and was out there with his paddle pushing that cement too. I think that was one of the most wonderful parts of the whole thing, seeing this man cooperate.

Second side of tape

Date of Interview - November 9, 1975

Ken: Well, Clemmie, we ended up last time with you having lost your real estate privileges in Marin County. So what did you do for a living after that?

Bar: That was nineteen fifty two, and I guess that's why we should never talk in between. I must have told you this when we weren't recording.

There was quite a struggle with this Council of Civic Unity and church groups to try to get my job back.

Ken: We didn't discuss it. That's why we have to go back once in a while.

Bar: Dick had gone through the roof of a house and hurt his back and wasn't able to work. It's funny, all these cheap pieces of real estate that we could have bought at that time. We certainly would have been so busy looking after our real estate interests we wouldn't have had any fun, and I think that's why we never went into that. We never were oriented to making money. But we bought a little house out in Tam valley. I think it was an old estate.

Bar: Anyway, we scraped together the cash. I had to go to work. So I couldn't struggle with this real estate thing any more. So Macy's was always a place you could go if you didn't have skills. They were hiring Christmas help. So I went into Macy's and went to work.

And I put the same effort into these little cheap jobs like Macy's [laughs] that I do with one that pays better. Not that I ever had a job that paid a lot. When I was selling real estate maybe I came close to five thousand dollars one year. And that was a big year. Our commission was five percent of the sale. I sold a lot more houses for ten and twelve thousand. I think I told you I sold one for twenty one thousand to Pete and Marion. And it was a Joe Stein pre fab house.

I worked in the bedding department. I used to say I worked in the sheets when anybody asked what I was doing at Macy's. Somehow I guess it was the literal minded people who thought that was funny.

By this time Vince Hallinan was running for president on the I.P.P. [Independent Progressive Party]. I stayed at Macy's then until January of fifty five when I left to have a hysterectomy. So there are almost four years of working there.

When I think of how I did things. Dick had a good truck. By that time every carpenter had a pick up truck. I had bought an old second hadd LaSalle. I felt like I was in a gangsters car. It was a big old black thing. But I had to have a car to drive from the house down on Montgord. It was about a mile to where I caught the Greyhound. When you are on your feet at Macy's all day, even that mile would have been too much.

Bar: Golly, you know I worked long hours and I wouldn't get home until seven. Dick was being cook again. Even though he had a bum back he would do the cooking.

And that was the time when a lot of people were underground, fifty-two, and fifty-three, the McCarthy period. And there was some guy that we never knew that was sent for us to look after. And he lived with us. And he had a phoney name. And I used to come home and he and Dick were drinking half and half vermouths, sweet and dry vermouth. And they were pretty pickled just on vermouth. And that dear guy was there with us for I don't know how many months. And it was so sad. He missed his family. And I think of Archie and all the people we knew that were away from their families. I guess it's all right to say those things.

Ken: I think so.

Bar: It's funny, I was reading about all this stuff, the wire tapping and the phone tapping. I remember at meetings we would always cover the phone up with a pillow. I don't know whether it did any good.

I remember in Mill Valley, this dear old couple, beautiful old people. And I guess it was the FBI had a camera in the house across the street from them taking pictures of the people who came there. We finally discovered it through someone's inadverdent remarking how in a place as little as Mill Valley that could happen. And they were watching these old people and watching the people who came to their house. <u>God</u>, it just seems incredible! And now, of course, it's all out in the open. We knew it was going on, and we tried to take what precautions we could to protect people.

Bar: Anyway, I was at Macy's until fifty five. And I'm trying to think of the Hallinan campaign. My life wasn't just Macy's.

Then at that time a group of us decided to study the teachings of Mao [Tse Tung]. The struggle in the party, is that part of this?

Ken: This is your life. You were in the party and you were part of the struggle.

Bar: There was this one woman, she was a brilliant person and had been a missionary in China. So this group of us began to swing that way. And we got into such trouble with the orthodoxy. I remember this young man who was the district organizer, and he gave her such particular hell because she was so brilliant and was kind of a leader of the group. And you know she got arthritis, and I'm positive it came out of that struggle, just like Oleta's [O'Connor Yates] illness came out of the tension and the pressure. And I guess it's like that everywhere. It isn't people who are killed outright, but the intellectual infights are enough to kill people because of these stresses.

Ken: We are not diverting.

Bar: Even before Stalin's death there were a whole bunch of us who felt this was not our way. And I rememberyou and I used to talk about it. This authoritarianism really got to us. So it was along fifty three or fifty four that I completely severed. Dick said he wouldn't quit. They'd have to throw him out. He was in a little group. I think there were four guys remaining.

Then I don't know where I directed my interests. I had belonged to the League of Women Voters and the A.U.W. [Association of University Women] but I never felt comfortable with those organizations because it seemed to

Bar: me they didn't go fast enough. They were always such good researchers.

And then we had this big garden, and with my characteristics of having everything perfect I cultivated every inch.

But we still had meetings. Who is the man who wrote all the books on Negro History?

Ken: Aptheker?

Bar: Right. Herb Aptheker was speaking, and that's a funny one. It was such a good house for a meeting. It held a lot of people and there was such good parking. I remember inviting our black neighbors over to hear him. And he was such an intellectual I think they went to sleep. But he was the first real historian for the black people.

And the last meeting I refused to have. I was sick of it. But did I regret it later! Remember the people who were in prison in China, the Ricketts. They were a young couple who were teaching at Peking University. But he was also a former Naval Intelligence man. He finally admitted to doing spy work. When they came out (that is really one of the most wonderful stories, an early story about China). I still have the book. It is called Prisoners of Liberation. They came out such good people and emphasized that the Chinese were not trying to politicalize them. They were trying to just get them to be better human beings, and to admit to their sins. Anyway, we were asked to have the meeting. I was working at Macy's and I was exhausted and I didn't let them come.

Ken: The party was divided into two factions at the time, the Stalinists and the Maoists, and you were a Maoist. Why did you refuse to have them come, because you were tired?

Bar: Yes, I wasn't in any organized group. This must have been fifty-six after I had left Macy's because it was not too long before we left Mill Valley. Right after I read their book, was I sorry. And I didn't even go to the meeting. But I was just tired of it all. Fed up.

Ken: I want to ask one question. Were you active in the union when you were at Macy's?

Bar: No. Not terribly. I belonged to the union, and it was pretty well established. I think I went to a few meetings. And I was tired.

Ken: Was your main interest in the community?

Bar: I think I was on the Board of Directors, That's a cute one. We had the Homestead Progressive Association when we first moved there in nineteen forty eight, and because of the Independent Progressive Party, the Wallace Party,(it was a very liberal community but they were afraid they would be identified with that) they changed the name to the Community organization or something like that. They took the word progressive out. But, you know, in the old days those people were progressive. There were a lot of old pepole in there that were really progressive. The word progressive in one period was sort of associated with real radicals.

Balance of tape not transcribed.

Tape six not transcribed.

First section of tape seven transcribed, as follows.

Tape eight not transcribed.

Small section of tape nine transcribed.

BARRY TAPE SEVEN - 1

Sunday, November 21st, 1975

Ken: We were talking last time about some of the activities you took part in when you were a Communist and a full time person in the Communist Party, and we left out an important part of your career. That was running Oleta O'Connor Yates' campaign for Supervisor in San Francisco; so can you tell us a little bit about that?

Bar: I suppose this came to your mind because of the Supervisorial campaign just finished in San Francisco. When I think of how many candidates were running and how the vote was split we should remember how lucky we were that there weren't that many million people that wanted to be supervisors. I'd like to make a comment on that. It just seems to me that there should be some way of screening. I know that sounds very undemocratic, but when I think of dear old Pete Mendelsohn, here was a good old leftist and did such a good job in fighting for the rights of old people in those hotels where this urban renewal thing has kicked them out. Pete hadn't a chance to win and I think he did pull votes from the other Mendelsohn who was in the Board and was a good guy on the whole. Of course this gave Pete a place for the old people to vote. I don't know. I have very mixed feelings about that.

I think it was nineteen forty when Oleta ran. Now it may have been nineteen forty two because we found that old picture of her and Jim Dimicus and me.

Bar: In any case Oleta O'Connor Yates was the Secretary of the Communist Party of San Francisco. She was brilliant, not only brilliant but a beautiful woman. And wherever she went she carried a lot of weight just becausse of her understanding of what the issues were and her ability to make everything so clear; and because she was a college graduate with an MA from Cal, maybe she could move in places where some others couldn't. So it was decided that Oleta should run for Supervisor.

And at that period (maybe it was at the beginning of the war when we were then allies with the Soviet Union) the pressure against the Communists had let up in this country. It was felt that she not only had a chan ce to win, but she would also be able to bring out the issues of the needs of the City. When I think of the needs of the City then and the needs of the City now, I'd hate to try and make comparisons because through the years the changes that have taken place in San Francisco are really scary. But it refledts the changes that are taking place everywhere.

It was an exciting time, but from such a long time ago it is very hard for me to remember just what we did in organizing the campaign. I do know this, that one of the procedures that is still followed is that you get just as much exposure for your candidate as possible. In those days you didn't have television, but we did have radio, and we appeared before as many organizations as we could. Since Oleta couldn't go to all of them, we had a set of people who did appear. And I remember waiting out in those dull, chilly old waiting rooms at the

Bar: waiting to speak to some union. And it was there that I got to know Pat Brown who became our Governor, but who was running for D.A. at that time. He was a very personable guy and we had very good chats about our candidacies and what the issues were.

When I hear of Barbalagata's campaign and his volunteers, that was always the secret of our successes - that we did have a huge group of volunteers who plastered the neighbors with posters and did door to door canvassing.

I can barely remember that we had an office up on Market Street and I can still remember some of the people who came in and went out on assignments. I still remember and still quote one old seaman (he's long dead) had come back from distributing a bunch of leaflets. I thanked him because I had been the dispatcher. He looked at me this disgust and said, "Don't thank me. I know what I'm doing." I've used that many times since - if you know what you're doing you don't need thanks.

I suppose we could go to the City Hall if we wanted to make this really authentic to find out how many votes Oleta got. I sort of have a remembrance that she got thirteen nine thousand votes, and that there were four to be elected and she came in fifth. So it was a very close race. I think that is probably all I need to say about that, and I don't know how important it is.

Somehow this brings up another thing. I suppose these tapes will go on and on forever because one thought brings on another. I've often said that my mind was like a tape recording andanywhere you plugged in there would be

Bar: another story.

A friend of mine was talking about being called for a job at H.E.W., and it reminded me of - I had taken an examination for a job as Inspector under the Wage and Hour division. I don't think they have them any more, but at that time under the Department of Labor, the Federal Department of Labor, there was such a catagory. I got the notification that I was first on the list. I was very hopeful. This was early in the war and I was hopeful of getting a job there. The big high salary of that job was something like three thousand dollars, and that sounded like a lot. It was. It was very good.

We had gone up to Washington to visit relatives. This I am sure was in nineteen forty, and someone forwarded a card to me that I was being called for an interview for this job. So we cut our vacation short and came tearing back down and I went in for the interview. Everything looked just lovely, and I wasn't hired. Of course I realized, and I think I finally got this out from someone, that they can always hire one of the first three. And the Yorty Committee blacklist was still hanging on to me. As I said before, I am not paranoid about is, but here is just another case of where I was a smart, bright woman who was blacklisted and not able to get this job.

Rest not transcribed

Barry
Tape Nine - December 7, 1975

Starting with counter 200

Ken: What I'm trying to do is fi ure out some questions - not a recapitulation, but do you think you missed anything in life. Do you regret not having had any children?

Bar: Not Really. Not really. I always say every woman should have at least one child and no questions askdd. But at the time of my childbearing period I didn't want kids, and I would have been a horrible mother. Now I would just make a beautiful mother. I just think it's an experience that all women should have because it is a part of our natural life. I really think it would enhance one's life and give you a little bit of being a different kind of person.

I remember one mutual friend of ours who was very distressed for years because she couldn't have children. I never felt morbid about it because I could have had children. It was my choice that I didn't have.

My sister had four because she didn't know any better. But now she makes it a virtue [laughs].

I think you mentioned something about potential.

Ken: Yes. That was one of the other questions. Do you really feel that you realized your potential? Or what was your potential and why didn't you realize it?

Bar: That goes back to rehabilitation counseling, that we are born geniuses, born with super intelligence, and that as life goes on and stresses build up. Now there is this Franch doctor who is advocating children being born without violence. When you think of a baby being born, and the first thing it knows is

it gets a slap on the butt. He says that's not necessary to get them to breath. He lays they against the mother's stomach and pets them and they start breathing. So I think that all the violence and the things that happen to us - Of course, my life, I don't know who spanked me because I was born without any doctor there so maybe I just started breathing on my own. And maybe that's why I have some attributes that people who suffered during their birth don't have.

But we know now that we all function with such a small amount of our intelligence and ability because of these stresses. In evaluation counseling that's our basic theory - that the human being does not respond instinctively like animals. We respond differently to every situation. And if every situation that arises goes smoothly, then that's fine. But a lot of times a situation that comes along has a lot of distress mixed up with it, so it's filed away. And the next time a similar situation arises we remember all the hurts and all the things that happened around this similar thing. We call it re-stimulation, which holds us back.

So I just feel I have not come anywhere near what my potential was because I have a good mind and I had such a fantastic body, just physically. I never even learned to swim because as a kid there was no place to swim. Of course I played basketball. I did a lot of that kind of sports. I think I said before that that was one of my big skills. But physically I didn't learn to do a lot of things. And mentally - you're stupified in the schools. You learn by rote. And I remember in our little grammar school, going there, girls

Barry Tape nine -3

Bar: weren't supposed to learn math. And that's ridiculous. I could always get one hnudred in grammar and my speech was fierce. I knew how to diagram a sentence and put all the adjectives and verbs and nouns in their proper places. So I never learned to study, and I never learned to study in high school. Somehow I wasn't connected with what I was doing. Even in college where I was working very hard I was actually doing what I had to do to get a degree because that meant I could get a better job.

So I have to thank the old Communist Party probably, even though we accuse them of being authoritarian and not allowing people to think I did do a lot of thinking. And I remember when Dick would come home (and he would stay home for a couple of months) we would get all the latest books on theory and read them and try to understand, and make our own interpretations and so on.

But I feel that in no way in this culture (and I made much more use of my potential than the rest of my family) what a waste in not having those things [music and art] developed. So I would say I am just like thousands, like most of the people who live today. We do not come anywhere near our potential. I think that's why I weep and feel very sad when some one dies because I feel, like my family - when my father died it seemed like he was such a beautiful person who never got to his potential. And the same way with my brothers and sisters.

Of course there are a few extreme cases where people do break through - a Beverly Sills. I heard her sing last night. Somewhere I guess some people are able to overcome the handicaps. And she's had a hard life too. But still she is one of the

Bar: most fabulous singers in the world. Anyway, from every kind of angle that I think of whatever I have achieved has been just a minimal amount.

Ken: Did you ever want to do anything that you were stopped from doing, anything that you really wanted to do that you didn't do?

Bar: The Department of Labor job - you were cut down on that, but otherwise did you have any idea of what you wanted to do that you didn't do?

Bar: No. Again, because of my environment, my goals were not very high. Like when I told my father I wanted to go to high school, he couldn't understand that. It was because I wanted to be a teacher. That was the only thing I knew that a woman did outside of getting married. And all the little goals that I had like being a playground teacher, a Y secretary, a social worker, those were very minimal goals. Of course my whole orientation, those things, came out of being brought up in the Methodist church, the Angelican religion where you are going to save the world, you don't do anything about your own self. And you drain out your own self in doing good. You think you are doing good for others. Of course no one can do good for another. Everybody has to do his own good, but we weren't brought up in that culture. When I think I got the scholarship to go to the University I was going to be a Methodist deaconess. In those days they were sort of like the nuns though they could get married. They also wore little black bonnets and black dresses even then. That was in the twenties. So my goals were small because there wasn't enough in my experience to give me goals that were far enough ahead.

Now my goal is within my limitations, and I don't accept them at all now. It is to just

Bar: to be the most wonderful human being that I can be. We call it emerging, to be an emerging human being. Every once in a while I get a taste. I see a little bit of the really beautiful person that I am. It's scary [laughs] this really sounds crazy, but it's true. And, you know, it's really scary for other people when you become so real and so unafraid and so just being who you are. For people who are not ready for it, sometimes it's a little threatening.

For maybe half a dozen times in the last year when I have had really heavy emotions on whatever I was doing, crying or being angry or what, if I had a counselor who was really aware and loving and who could listen, I had a glimpse of who I was, and it's great.

Who's to know what my potential was. But I just feel that no human being ever comes anywhere near their potential.

Ken: The other thing I was going to ask about was recognition. I guess we're getting philosophical but recognition means being "somebody". What is being somebody in this world today? A rock singer is somebody, so you have to be somebody to yourself then.

Bar: You put your finger on it. I have always been an aggressive person about getting recognition. I like the limelight. Like yesterday I really enjoyed it [referring to being recognized by the Emeritus College of Marin] because my name was listed alphabetically, and my name was the start of the list. We were just going to stand up wherever we would be in the auditorium, but everybody demanded that we walk up front, and I was called first to walk up front, and I did it with just ecstasy, enjoying every minute of it because it was a kind of recognition. They told people to hold their applause until we all got up there. But when I started walking up he said, "Clemmie always brings a great burst of

Bar: sunshine and love," or something like that, "when she comes into the office." I was enjoying every minute of that, even on that level. So I don't kid myself. But I have not had any national recognition. The most notorious recognition I had was because of my [laughs] subversive activities rather than because I was a beautiful human being.

Ken: Let's get on to the question of money. What about money?

Bar: Well, money, I had a crazy attitude about money! Money has always been something that you had to have. If I had it, I always used it.

The first money I ever had, we always had runt pigs in every litter, and I remember the first money I ever had came from a little runt pig that was given to me. It was my turn to get the runt. I suppose there might have been several runts because we had a lot of old sows. God do I have a thing about pigs. I really love them. They are such intelligent animals. And the way we treat them. And then I go and eat them when they are made into bacon.

I think my father bought him. We didn't have Four H when I was a little kid. I took care of him and got him big and fat, and my father paid me twenty five dollars for him. That was a lot of money,

Then, when I started teaching in the country school, I think I earned seventy dollars a month. This was in nineteen nineteen, nineteen twenty. That seemed like a lot of money then. But I remember I bought ready made clothes. I can still remember a dress and a coat I bought that were terribly extravagant. But then if I didn't have money I wasn't unhappy. Like when I was in college I would be down to just no money at all, cadging my meals [laughs]. Then

And you know pay in those days ~~has no~~

Bar: has no relationship to what the pay is in these days. Our social security is so low that even before we quit work our earnings are nothing like earnings are today, so our social security is no where near the ultimate amount that a person who workedup to the bell gets.

Dick was always different. He was very penurious about little things, and we lived very frugally. I remember when we lived on August Alley and paid thirteen dollars a month rent. And the parties we had were never extravagant. We had a spaghetti party or a bean party. It was really a good time. And I'm not saying that because it's that far away. Money was still not the criterion. Somehow our lives have never been oriented toward making money. We had saved, and with the property we had picked up over here in Marin (it wasn't expensive property then) we thought we would have enough to see us through until we got to social security and then our social security would carry us through. When we moved to Westwood in a two thousand dollar house with no overhead we thought we had it made.*

I've always said now it is much easier to live because I know how much I have to live on, and we are very comfortable about it. We are able to get by and I find good bargains at the Goodwill or someplace. I have probably more clothes now because my clothes never wear out.

So money is not our problem. It is only a problem in relationship to the extravagances as I read in the paper this morning describing the decadence of this group of the wealthy in New York, and here's New York City with the

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* In early tapes Clemmie talks about how both their illnesses wiped them out financially.

Bar: working people and the middle class people just on their asses. And the Port Authority building this two million dollar club for executives and their friends. This contrast again is almost like in the old Russia. And you wonder how much longer we can handle it. And that's the only place that it bothers me. It just seems so ridiculous that there is this discrepancy. And when I think of the young mothers that are on this A.F.D.C. where they have such a low budget, I don't know how they manage. This is where the lack of money bothers. It is not my lack of money. It is the injustice of this system. I don't know how long this stupid capitalist system can last. We've been thinking it was going for forty years [laughs]

Ken: The revolution is just around the corner.

Bar: Yes, and it still holds up. I used to think I knew the answer, but I don't know what the answer is. All I know is my feeling now is the only way we can change is through each of us getting to be the best human being we can and then knowing what to do whenever there is an issue that we can do something on.

You know, Dick has been sitting here in his chair during these nine interviews, He is such a party of my life (and it's almost forty years) I would just like to have him say a few things on this tape, He's another one of these great human beings.

balance of tape not transcribed.

Interview with Clemmie Barry
Date of Interview: 7/26/78

Interviewer: Lucy Kendall
Transcriber: Lucy Kendall

Begin: Tenth Interview - first tape

Ken: This is the tenth interview with Clemmie Barry at her homein Kentfield, California, two and a half years after the initial interviews were completed. This in order to ask and get answered certain questions which were not originally asked.

Well, Clemmie, we are going to go back to your childhood and family. How would you describe your mother?

Bar: I think of her as always being there. Of course she had no where to go because we lived on a farm five miles from the nearest village. (We didn't call them villages. We called them towns.) She was always cooking, cleaning, washing, gardening, raising chickens, sewing. I remember her as always doing for the rest of us.

She was very small. She was barely five feet tall, and my father was over six feet. I am built like my father. And she had a wry sense of humor. Knowing what I know now, I think how she must have hurt a lot and how she tolerated what today no woman would tolerate. Those women were caught. They were really trapped.

There were eight of us children. Of course she had no way of controlling birth.

Maybe this goes over into the woman question, but as a woman she was stuck with these big heavy things and because there was no out, then she (I don't like to use the word) coped and lived as creatively as she could with all that work and responsibility that was laid on her.

Her one solace was her religion. We finally

Bar: got organized (it was before my teens even) so that we got the old horse and buggy and went to church and Sunday school every Sunday. That was a great thing for her. And during her later years her religion was something that helped her to survive.

Ken: What other forms did her creativity take?

Bar: Well, if you ever to to quilt shows nowadays, she did these wonderful quilts. I have one in my cedar chest over there. It is appliqued butterflies and it is made of the print dresses women wore in the twenties and thirties. They made their own. They bought this material. It is really fine quilting.

That's always been a thing with me. Her cooking was a very creative thing too. She did very different things. And she always had a flower garden up close to the house that she could take care of. And I remember her trying to get lilac bushes to grow on that clay hill where we lived. And she would carry the wash water in the summer when it would be very dry (like we did in Marin last year) out to these bushes to keep them going. I guess that's about it.

Ken: What about describing your father?

Bar: I guess because I'm a lot like him I always want to cry when I talk about dad. He was a big - (how do I say that?) He was a very simple person. He never really got hold of life, I think. Mother was in charge of her life. But here he was with eight children. Let me go back. He was left an orphan. That thing of Grandpa Shuck committing suicide has always been a big heavy thing in my mind of about how my father survived in those days. [pause]. As I remember, he was very easily influenced. He was inclined to agree with people on political things. (Isn't it funny how hard it is to describe him)

Bar: He was very gruff with us as children, and sometimes he lost his temper. We were very smart kids - like a lot of people think that when their parents discipline them it was their fault, and they grow up feeling like it was their fault. And I remember we used to say "Dad's mad. He's mad again with that old cow", or something. He never would spank us or use any force against us unless he was upset. And we were smart enough to know it wasn't us; that it was his problem. That's just kind of an insight now, but I'm sure it was true.

He carried this responsibility of this big family of eight children. Grandpa Hill (mother's father) had given all of his eight children one hundred and sixty acres of Nebraska land. Dad's ambition was to be able to have a hundred and sixty acres for each of us. That wasn't in the cards. I think he had three hundred and twenty acres that he was farming. That was wheat and corn. Then he raised stock.

One of the things that happened in later life, in nineteen twenty he retired. After World War I the farmers had made a little money and he moved on to a ten acre plot in town, and he took two of the guernseys with him and a few of the neighbors got milk, and then he became the village milk man because his milk was so wonderful. He got more guernsey and jersey cows. He had an old Model T Ford and delivered the milk. He couldn't retire, and it was a very good way for him to continue being active. And dad loved people. That way he was important to the town because he could talk to all the people.

Ken: You were nineteen when the Suffrage Act was passed. And there was also prohibition. Did the family discuss things like that?

Bar: I don't remember. My mother belonged to the W.C.T.U., the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and she wouldn't allow any liquor around. And of course there was this big campaign in the public schools. I remember the teacher giving us the demonstration of the white of an egg. If you poured alcohol on it it coagulated, and that would happen to your brain if you took alcohol [laughter]. But I don't remember much of what we discussed. I remember that dad voted for Debs [Eugene] in nineteen twenty which was amazing to me, how he knew because he only read the St. Jo papers.

One thing that stands out is when I was smaller we were never allowed to giggle at the table. My older sister and I were sent away from the table more than once because the more you repressed the funnier it is and - I think we didn't discuss any kind of political things. If we did I was too young to know what it was.

During World War I I was thirteen, we were very involved in that because local boys went, and my brother went. I remember how we all cried when he joined the Navy.

Ken: What about the suffeage movement?

Bar: I don't remember anything about it at all. I mean in my younger years. I would just be making it up, I think.

Ken: It was when you were ninteen. Did you think about it at all?

Bar: I was teaching in a country school and I should have been aware. There was nothing for a young girl to do except be a hired girl for a farmer or teach in a country school. And being like I was I would think I would want the upper thing. But I don't think I had any awareness of it.

Ken: What values did your parents teach you?

Bar: Honesty, and hard work. Now that I think about it, they taught mainly by how they lived themselves. The story on another tape of my first day of school when I did something wrong when I stole and I lied. And I was very religious too. I thought the bible was written in English. I can't recall that there was any overt teaching about caring about each other or other people. But the fact that there were eight of us, the rights of others obviously would have had to be considered.

I don't know if I ever told this, but I was very aware of it last week when I had the flue, that anyone who got sick, you were ostrasized by the rest of the children. If you got sick you were doing something bad. The only person who paid any attention was mother. We could drink coffee but we weren't allowed tea except if we were sick. I can still remember the tea that we had. And I think that has a lot to do with my healthy attitude about my body; that being sick was a no no and you were really looked down on by the rest of the family. No one would play with you.

Ken: You know in most families that I've read about and heard about, they've always picked out one boy to go to college and become "something."

Bar: We had no such aspirations because no one ever went to college.

Ken: Then what were the families expectations for the boys?

Bar: To get a piece of land and get married. Those were the expectations for all of us - that you got married, had a farm, and raised children.

Ken: Why did they name you after your father instead of naming one of the boys after your father?

Bar: I have no idea [laughs].

Ken: I thought that was rather strange.

Bar: I always laugh and say they were running out of names by the time I came along. I have no idea, but I'm glad they did. I remember they had a hard time naming the twins, who were three years younger than I, so they named them Cora and NORA Laura. It had to be euphonious.

Ken: Were there boys chores and girls chores?

Bar: Yes, but overlapped because there were only two boys and six girls. I milked cows and I worked in the fields along with my brothers.

Ken: Was that considered man's work?

Bar: That was man's work, but women did it. I think there was a little bit of antipathy toward women working in the fields, especially the wife or the mother. I think it was all right if the children did. I remember one Swedish woman, a neighbor, who worked in the fields, and I think she was looked down on a little, that that was kind of a "peasant" thing to do. My mother had all she could do to take care of all the other stuff I just named that she did. There was no time.

Ken: I'm not asking all the questions I'd like to, but there is one thing, who did you admire when you were a child?

Bar: There were two women in town. One of them was the druggists wife, and the other one, I don't know what her husband did. But I considered them to be ladies. They were warm and loving women and they had a little kind of polish that we didn't have. And I remember they were always very interested in me. The drug store woman worked in the store. They probably didn't have very much money. That's the only thing I can say. They were a little different and I guess I aspired to that.

Bar: One question you mentioned you might ask was about my place in the family as a sixth child. I think that was a very important thing in that I had a very secure place with the older children making a fuss over me. I feel very grateful for that.

Ken: Why do you think you were different from your brothers and sisters?

Bar: I don't know. I wonder about that. I feel like I've always been a maverick. And it may be that place in the family where I got a lot of attention although I got hurt like everybody does, you know the emotional hurts that come along. But I think I escaped a lot of the things, like one of the twins, a very unhappy person that somehow got hurt in a way that she never outlived it. I think I said before that I wanted to go away to a girls' school, and how I ever, and how did I ever know about it? I think part of it is that I was adventurous, like going to the Methodist Conference at Estes Park where I met the ~~Pickets~~ TIPPETTS who arranged for me to go to the University of Denver. I was always open to something new, and things fell in my path. How did I get that way, I don't know.

Now we talk about power and the power of human beings within the structure of our lives and the structure we live in. I feel I was always a very powerful child. The last time my father tried to spank me I fought him, and I won. So I think I had a lot of power that has never been crushed. I don't know if it is in retrospect that I'm building up this beautiful image [laughs]. I'm sure there were a lot of times when I was very hurt and upset like every child is.

Ken: I asked you about sex before and you said you really didn't remember how you learned about sex, but how did you learn about menstruation?

Bar: I do remember about sex.

Ken: Good, you remember.Tell me.

Bar: Sex was all over the place on a farm, from the chickens on. We never thought anything about it. If we had a good bull and somebody bought a cow to have her bred, we never thought anything about a bull mounting a cow.

Ken: Did your mother discuss this with you?

Bar: No. We absorbed that, you see, but then sex between human beings was something bad. But why it would be normal in animals? But that's how I learned about it. But transcribing that over to human beings.

Ken: She never discussed that? But menstruation, she must have discussed that with you.

Bar: I don't think so. I think I learned it from my older sisters and from kids at school.

Ken: Do you remember your first menstrual period?

Bar: No. All I remember is we didn't have Modess or things like that. We had pieces of blanket that had to be washed. God, I can still see those - aaagh! We soaked them in cold water, and we used them over again. They were washed. What women put up with then!

Ken: When you discussed this, were there myths about menstruation? One woman told me that she heard if a boy saw the blood shewould become pregnant. Things like that.

Bar: No. I knew somehow that you got pregnant if you got too close to boys. And I really loved them and I would do a lot of what we called necking. I guess that's what we call foreplay now.

Ken: Did your mother tell you about your breasts when they started to develop?

Bar: No. When I was growing up you wore tight bands to keep your breasts from showing. And I really never had very big breasts. I was so tall, and my breasts (I learned later) were just perfect.

Bar: There was some kind of a feeling that breasts were very important, but I can't remember any of that being discussed, and I remember an awful lot. I liked my body, and I remember when I got to a point (I may have begun menstruating then) I got very pretty I thought [laughs], and I liked that.

Ken: Did your mother give you any advice when you left home to go to college?

Bar: I knew so much more than she did [laughter]. I remember the summer that I went away to college my cousin who was going to Stanford (he was my father's sister's child) - we corresponded in World War I. He was in Siberia and I remember him sending me pictures. He was with the American Expeditionary Forces. I had never met him. He came to visit. This is real sexy. He was a big fancy athlete from Stanford. He went back to an A.A.A. track meet and stopped to visit. And, my god, did I fall in love with him. And he went around with an erection all the time I am sure. And we went swimming together. I remember my mother was really worried about Jim.And we would sit out on the old porch swing. I had a date to leave by train from Denver andhe went on that same train with me. And there again the fear of pregnancy was so heavy in us that we would refrain. Of course I had had no sexual intercourse at that time, but I certainly wanted to have it with him. And I don't remember anything that my mother said, but I remember there was a lot of worry going on because they must have seen what was happening.

Ken; Did you vote when you became twenty-one?

Bar: I'm not sure that I did. I was very involved in trying to get to school. I don't remember.

Ken: How did you reconcile your religious and family upbringing with your free, for that time, sex life. During college you slept with Ivan before you got married.

Bar: There was no conflict at all because by that time I decided I wasn't going to have a nervous breakdown about sex, and I had dumped my religion pretty much by then.

Ken: Ivan was your first sexual experience?

Bar: Right.

Ken: Then you married him?

Bar: I felt I had to make an honest man of him. That was a glowing example of what happens to young people today. The only thing is they live together now without going through the ceremony, which is better. But you fall in love with love. If I would have analzyed him as a human being I wanted to live with I would have known he wasn't, but he had all the attributes that I needed to have sex. And he got sucked into it also.

Ken: And it didn't bother you at all?

Bar: That's a kind of funny thing. That's a part of moving along with the current. They call it now flowing with whatever the universe is. And I think that I did that unawarely, very unawarely .

Ken: Now I have some feminie questions. You mentioned your abortion when you and Dick were together. Was that a joint decision between you and Dick? In the tape you said"I couldn't have a child." Now, did you discuss this with Dick?

Bar: Yes. He was very much in agreement. In fact I think that at that time he was scared to death to think about children. Somehow I was very detached from him. There was no permanent relationship. In fact I've always said, even now, I never intended to stay [laughs] and forty years later I'm here. It didn't need to be any decision for him either. I was my own self

Bar: and living my own life.

A little friend of mine had an abortion last week and I was amazed at how objective she was about it compared with what a lot of women are going through now when they have an abortion. They feel very upset about doing it.

Ken: Can you re-live your abortion?

Bar: I can only re-live the part where I almost went to a bad place to get it done.

Second side of tape

Ken: Was this in New York?

Bar: I was working on the Eastern shore of Maryland, organizing for the Amalgamated, and Dick had warned me that he had spent so much money paying for abortions. And I had used no contraceptives because I had been told I had a tipped womb. When I decided I was going to leave Ivan maybe I ought to have his child. So I lived merrily along with never a worry. How I got by as long as I did I don't know. Anyway after Dick came back from Spain, I guess it must have been April when I realized I was pregnant. My god, it was terrible. I would have been thirty five or thirty six. So where to go? And I began to make inquiries. We knew people in Washington and I don't know who gave me the name of this woman that they said would do an abortion.

I had to meet some one somewhere. I guess this was so awful that this is one place that my tape [of memory] is kind of fuzzy. And I got into a car with other women who were blindfolded so we wouldn't know where we were being taken. We went somewhere around Washington, D.C. In those days I am sure there were so many young women working in Washington that there probably were pregnancies all over the place. We went in this house and there was kind of a parlor-waiting room there that we were ushered into, and as I am trying to reconstruct it it seems that the one

Bar: who did it came out and said that I would have to stay all night. I don't know what it was, but I was scared to death. I thought it was not for me. So I got up and left. I went out and got back in this car. Nobody tried to restrain me or anything. I was so terrified when I saw this place. Apparently I knew enough about the butchers that I would have a baby rather than go through this.

When I got back somehow or other I got the name of a doctor in New York. I didn't have much money. I think I was making twenty-five dollars a week. I borrowed money from a friend. Was Dick involved? He was because he went to New York with me. I was given a general anaesthetic and as I remember going under I heard the doctor say, "I would never want to do this again", or something like that. Then when I woke up there was no pain. Then we were in a hotel room. Dick was staying with me.

I am sure that that was part of my pseudo bravery, that I didn't admit to how bad I felt emotionally. I think I felt very badly emotionally.

Ken: I wanted to ask you if you had any trauma.

Bar: Yes, but like we do - if you had a hurt in those days you buried it.

Of course then I got pregnant again that summer.

Ken: Then what happened.

Bar: I don't know if I went back to the same doctor, but I had another abortion.

Then I had one more after we came to San Francisco. It was during the Chinese New Year or something. We lived on August Alley and we got carried away about something and made love withoutmy diaphragm. By that time I had learned to wear the damn diaphragm. And somebody came in. In August Alley someone was always coming or going, and I didn't even have a chance to go

Bar: douche. So then I went to this guy who was upstairs above the party headquarters on Market Street. I remember meeting somebody I knew there, and we didn't even speak to each other. I don't think we had a car. Dick came and took me in a taxi and I reeked from chloroform or ether. But that was the last time. I guess I learned.

Ken: Some women say they have a feeling or loss, and others of guilt.

Bar: Now I could pick up a feeling of loss. Then I was just very busy. And if you remember that period. There was you and Louise and Oleta. For the women in the movement having a baby at that time was sort of a disloyalty to the cause. The first baby I remember in the movement I remember was when Mike Gold had a baby and everybody was all taken aback. He didn't Have it. His wife did of course. I think I covered that up. The only loss I feel is the experience of having a child. Now when I see children I think what a good mother I would be now. And then I would have been a very horrible mother because my whole orientation was saving the damn world. That is really rationalization because every child survives somehow. But if I had it to do over, taking all the information that I had and the place that I was, I don't know that I would have done any differently. That's just one experience I missed.

Ken: How did you learn about birth control?

Bar: It was after that first abortion. I don't know how or who fitted me with a diaphragm. I know I hated the diaphragm.

Ken: If you hated the diaphgram so, did you ever discuss it with Dick so that he would use something?

Bar: I'm sure we did, but you know that condoms were the only thing that men had, and I would rather use a diaphgram than have his use a condom.

Bar: I think it was interfering. I could wear that all the time because we were the kind that would have sex at the drop of a hat [laughter] or the drop of a diaphragm. I remember the second time I got pregnant was we were driving somewhere over on the Eastern Shore and we got a big watermelon coming up from the South. And we loved watermelon. from a truck - We stopped womewhere by a stream and we ate this wonderful watermelon, and we had sex out there in the woods. I guess I didn't have my diaphragm along.

Anyway for a man's withdrawal - I never could stand that. I never felt I could have a complete orgasm if he did that.

Somehow I think of women who say they never have orgasms or enjoy sex, I can't remember, and I don't remember that because when I was a kid I masturbated that I knew what the feeling was, but I never had any problem with my enjoyment of sex.

Ken: Ok, we can get off that.

Bar: That's good.

Ken: Each facet of this is so fascinating we could go on forever, and I don't know where to stop.

Bar: I'm sure as I keep thinking I could pick up on the ramifications too. In our counseling thing now sex has been such a overwhelming thing in so many people's lives in negating their development that we have a group of men and women recall their first sexual episodes and then what we call to discharge on them. We use discharge for the word cary. You know, discharging your emotions. I think that somehow I must have closed off certain areas because it was something bad when I was a child. And when I found out it was something really good, maybe that helped me to break off all the other

Bar: taboos. It is like they tell young people now that marijuana is bad for them and they find out it really isn't, then they disregard the authorities that said it was.

Ken: We'll go to the Y.W.C.A. now. I just broke these questions down into catagories, and they don't necessarily follow one another. As a Y.W.C.A. Secretary, who taught you their methods of work?

Bar: I think I just knew. John Dewey was one of our heros at that time. I may not be able to describe what his philosophy was, but a part of the philosophy of the Y was not that we were do-gooders. But we were looking toward the growth of women. Actually that's what the orientation was. When I think of the women I dealt with in those big hosiery mills at Redding where we raised their consciousness to the point where they were the leaders of a strike,

One of the things I remember very well was that we had discussions, and then we came to concensus. We never came to a vote. And that method is still an acceptable method of trying to get everybody to understand what the issue was and come to a concensus rather than taking some sort of a democratic vote by counting noses.

I think that the Y took in the sort of a person I was. And, of course, it was during the years of the old personality cult. I was very outgoing. I was a very bubbly kind of a person.

Ken: That's just the word I was going to use.

Bar: And sometimes I wish I were not so much so now. I bubble at the wrong times.

When I think of my first job at the Y, it was in Parkersburg, West Virginia where those big viscose mills had just started making rayon. And from where I am now, it was in seeing the possibility of something, and then making a

Bar: project out of it. If I saw a group of young women that were working the hours they worked, and the way that they worked, and they came in and we had a club supper and an"educational program", I could not help but see the individual person and the needs that might come from that person, and try to develop it. I think I'm not making this up. And that's why I had to struggle and right now I have to struggle in keeping a peer relationship. Somehow I always felt like a leader. Now I don't really appreciate that. But at that time it always seemed that I knew best.

Ken: How did you decide to work with the industrial girls instead of the business girls, or did it just happen? (See zeroxed report of Y report in Parkersburg)

Bar: It was overlapping. I did both. In Parkersberg and Redding I worked with both. But with the industrial women, there was a quality in them that you saw a bigger need there. They were not as self assured as the young women that were in business because the office worker had a much better status. The white collar worker was thought to be better. So maybe, as a farm person, I looked up to the white collar people and maybe I identified more with the industrial women. My whole life had been much freer than their.

Ken: What kind of a relationship did you have with these hoisery workers?

Bar: I am really embarrassed when I think of how they really worshipped me. They [pause]

Ken: Go on -

Bar: They trusted me. One of the women I still see, she was in Redding and then we met twenty five years later out here in San Francisco. She walked into Macy's and said, "Are you Clemmie?" She said, "If you'd told us the moon was made out of green cheese, we would have believed you."

Bar: And I know I had that quality. Whatever I said was so.

Ken: Did you know them personally?

Bar: Yes.I would be entertained at their homes. I think I still kept that kind of leader-follower relationship.

When I think about the time I met you how insecure I was in the Party leadership. That was an entirely different thing because there I kept being pushed into things where I wasn't comfortable. We'll get to that.

Yet I had some kind of pattern that never allowed me to be all that I had the potential for way back then. And I remember when I was a Y secretary in Utrecht, Brooklyn, I was the head of the district headquarters. And when I was leaving they were considering me for the job of the general secretary for the Brooklyn Y. And there was some kind of a personality trait and a weakness that I had. I don't know what they were, but I was aware of them and I think they were too. One of them was I allways got the bellyache at club suppers. It was the combination of eating and the excitement of doing things so I was always sick at my stomach the next morning. I don't know what that was, but there was some limitation there in spite of all my feeling of assurance. I don't know what importance it has because, god knows, I have worked on it now in these past years and I still haven't found it.

Ken: We were talking about the hoisery girls and their going on strike. Did they have a union there?

Bar: No. That was when they organized the union. This was in 1934. It was during the Textile Workers big drive.

Ken: What part did you actually have in that strike?

Bar: I had no part except it was the women from our department who were the most aware. They had been going to conferences about the conditions of working women. They had had their conssciousness raised.

Ken: Did the Y tell them to do anything about it?

Bar: Heavens no. I may have, but I can't remember any overt talk. There must have been though - a"what you need is the union." But I think it all coincidted because the Textile Workers had come into town like I did when I became an organizer. And you pick out someone who is aware and militant.

Ken: Well, the Y used to be the center of things, like notices would be put up "Working girls come to a meeting" and so on.

Bar: Right. And the Y was doing a very big educational thing and what we call consciousness raising ~~t~~today. What we do with women now is what we were doing with women who worked in industry then. We didn't label it as such.

Ken: Looking back now, how did working in the Y prepare you for working as an organizer for a labor union?

Bar: It was very natural. It was obvious that what these women needed wasn't the Y swimming pool as much as they needed a union. Actually they were working for three and four dollars a week. At that time the minimum for the N.I.R.A. [National Industrial Recovery Act] under Roosevelt [Franklin D.] was thirteen dollars a week.

I'm not sure. I must have told it before about my going up to New York to see Potovsky.

Ken: In 1934 they had the San Francisco general strike. Did you know about it or did it effect you in any way?

Bar: There was so much going on everywhere then. I can't really remember any specific awareness. I am sure I would have known about it because at that time I was reading the Daily Worker, or at least would have seen it. But I don't think it had any particular affect because there was a lot of stuff going on. People were organizing everywhere, Gastonia, North Carolina. Did you ever interview any women in the Textile Workers? There was one woman who moved to San Francisco, Sonia Baltrum.

Ken: We interviewed her, but she wasn't in Gastonia, or amy of those places.

Bar: There was some woman who lived in San Francisco who was in the middle of the whole Gastonia thing.

Ken: When you went into organizing for the Amalgamated, what knowledge did you have of labor history or of the labor movement?

Bar: One summer, it was the summer when I started to work at Parkersburg before I went to the Y, I went to New York and took a six or eight weeks course in labor history in preparation to work for the Y. The Y sent me. They paid my expenses. I am trying to remember. I think I met A.J.Muste at that time. I can just see the man who taught. It seems like his name was Williams. When you have an open mind like I had then you can cram an awful lot in a short period. It seems to me that was probably a very good background of understanding what was going on.

Ken: How did you feel coming from an all woman group like the Y.W.C.A. into a union run by all men?

Bar: [laughs]. I don't think I was as aware of it as I should have been. At that time the men were getting fifty dollars a week and expenses and the women were getting twenty five dollara a week period.

Bar: I never loved Sidney Hillman particularly because I never knew him in any warm relationship. But those men, they might have been very loving about helping the working women who worked in their plants, but in dealing with their organizers they were kind of macho I think. They knew best - not only that they were male, but they were the leaders.Of course,god knows they got to their leadership in the hard way. When you think of all the union leaders in those days, they came through such terror, not only the gangs. I saw a T.V. movie the other night. It was about the garment industry and the mob moving in and making strikes last. It makes you wonder how many real strikes there are. Yes, I think I felt kind of a put down, and I especially felt unfair treatment when all the workers were fired at the Friedman Harry Marx case while the Supreme Court was considering whether this was part of interstate commerce thing, and we finally won. But they treated me as though it were my fault. And I remember I was sent up to Lancaster, Pennsylvania to organize handkerchief workers. There was nothing supporting about it.

Ken: Why did they think it was your fault?

Bar: I don't know. I was moved into what was considered a very low down situation, and that may have all been in my head when you think about it because there was nothing more you could do there in Richmond. You couldn't sign up more people because you'd just get more people fired. But I remember that went through my head, that I was being demoted from the leadership role that I had had in that organizing drive to the handkerchief workers up in Lancaster. And I also went up to Wilkes Barre that winter. I'll never forget those COLM coal piles - that awful anthracite coal company. I was there in the winter and I was scared to even take the car out, the ice was so terrible.

Bar: I was up there to organize the pants workers.

There I think is part of that thing in me, now that I am aware of it, that I didn't know my worth. I thought I was very assured, and then there were situations like that where I really wasn't.

I am sure that Dorothy Bellanca was on the Board of the Amalgamated. She was married to August Ballanca of the Bellanca airplane people and they were both on the Board of the Amalgamated. And she was a token woman on the Board, and a very vital strong woman she was.

Ken: Did you know her?

Bar: Yes because she used to come and help. If we had a meeting she would come and talk.

Ken: Who broke you in. How did you get trained as an organizer. They just didn't sign you up and send you out into the field, did they?

Bar: Yes.

Ken: Nobody told you anything? They just sent you in green?

Bar: Well, I was smart. [laughter]. There was no orientation at all. I remember I was told to organize and I did. I just went down there as I told you and ran into an old railway trainman and he gave me the names of a couple of women who were complaining about conditions. And that's where I cry, about how those women trusted me, and how when I got their cards signed up I would sleep with them under my pillow. No, there was absolutely no training. When I think of it, the Y background was enough.

Ken: What about Edy Christiansen. How did she help you?

Bar: Edy came in when we went to Norfolk. Then we had a whole big staff. There was Franz Daniel who was the head of the Socialist Party. He and his wife Elizabeth -

Tape two - same day

Bar: When we were organizing this huge clothing plant in Norfolk, Edy and I did the work and Franz sat around and drank boilermakers [a shot of whiskey and a beer chaser] all night. He was typical of the big labor leader. He was a very nice guy, but he was the brains and we did the work.

Ken: How was he the brains.

Bar: As we think of it now he was. He had the assignment and he was the leader because he was male, of course.Edy had so much more experience. She had worked for the Amalgamated way back during the Rochester strike. Way back when. There was an awful lot of stuff went on.

We were being very proper. Somebody came down to Harrington and threw a stink bomb into the shirt factory, which was done without my knowledge at all, and I am sure it was somebody from New York.

Ken: Was there any contact with the Women's Trade UnionLeague?

Bar: I don't think I had any direct connection with them. I remember Lucy Randolph Mason who was a big Virginia name. I think she was head of the Consumers something. I remember, at that time, Frances Perkins was Secretary of Labor. And we had a luncheon where all of us went to meet her. I think that was a woman thing.

Ken: What support did you get from groups outside of trade union groups?

Bar: The only ones were in Washington D.C. where there was the League of Women Shoppers. I think that was about the only one.

Ken: Had the Amalgamated ever hired women who came up from the ranks, who had worked in the shops, to work with you and Edy?

Bar: Yes. I remember one woman from Virginia. But they took men from the ranks, but not too often. I can't think of any women who moved up during my time.

Ken: Was the Amalgamated mostly men who worked in the shops?

Bar: No. It was that the shops make male clothing, and those under the I.L.G.W.U. [International Ladies Garment Workers Union] made womensclothing. There were many, many woman who worked in the shirt factories where they made men's shirts. There would be men cutters. Most of the cutters were trained in New York.

Ken: Then you don't remember meeting or working with any women who came up from the ranks?

Bar: No, I don't.

Ken: Were there meetings of organizers? Did you get together and discuss your problems?

Bar: When we had this big strike in Norflok, the Finklestein Company that moved away (andthe bosses in New York were after him too), there was a big staff there and we did have meetings around that particular situation. But there weren't general organizers meetings like going to New York and having a meeting. We would just go up individually and talk with whoever we had to talk with.

Ken: Did you ever have any problems you had to take up with the International?

Bar: The time of the Harrington strike, I was in New York to tell them I had the majority of the people signed up and we were going to ask for an election. So I went up to New York to see how

Bar: we did it and get the wheels moving and came back. I had left on Friday and that was the day the boss fired this one woman because he found out about the union. When I got back Sunday night they were already to go on strike Monday morning. They rarely came out to the field, even old Joe Schlossberg. I know who our biggest rabble rouser was - Charles Irwin. I don't think I ever mentioned him. He was a great big tall guy and he was editor of the New York Call at one time. He was a Socialist. He had a white beard. He was big and flamboyant and just fantastic, and he came to make speeches.

They would send in anybody. You could just ask for any help you needed. And if you needed legal help, there was always that help. The Amalgamated never were chintzy about money. If you needed to pay benefits because people had been fired you could.

Ken: How did the men organize differently than the women organized? Or did they?

Bar: I dom't remember. You see I had a very limited thing. But I don't remember the men going out and making home visits like we women did. We went out and signed people up. The men would be more inclined to call a rally and make speeches. But it just happened that was my experience because it was under cover. It was before the National Labor Relations Act had been declared constitutional. So if you went in and signed anybody up you could get them fired. We did it as secretely as we could.

Ken: I asked you already about the difference in the way men and women organizers were treated, and you talked about financial treatment. What about the rest of the treatment?

Bar: When I look back now, they really had more power. They were looked to more as leaders.

Bar: When I think of Edy (she was a much more able woman that I was) she got a lot of responsibility. And I had a lot of responsibility too.

But the time I made the statement that the workers couldn't organize without government support, it was true but Hillman said I didn't need to say it though.

Ken: What difference was there in the way you were treated as a woman by the employers and the union officials.

Bar: I stayed out of that. I never wanted to be a business agent, and I never dealt with any kind of contractual things. I was a better rabble rouser.

Ken: What techniques did you use in talking union when you went to visit people at home?

Bar: I think you asked about conditions. You let them tell you how it was. And then you had an answer, that the union could provide security and a way of getting what they needed. I would say that was a fairly simple thing. I think probably it is like what I am doing now.* When I listen and have women tell me how hard it is, then you begin to win their confidence, and if you have a solution (which now in what I'm doing, I don't have) - in those days you had the solution of the union to offer - security, better pay, all these things that the union did really guarantee.

Ken: You organized men too, didn't you?

Bar: Especially in Norfolk, and in Richmond too.

Ken: How did the men receive you as an organizer?

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* Ms. Barry is presntly working to help women who are going through the same way of life she had - taking complete careof husbands who, in one way or another, are almost completely incapacitated. (mainly stroke victims)

Bar: I don't remember making home visits. How did we do that with the men? There were more women, but there were lots of men. There was never a feeling that the men looked on me as a woman. I could have been Joan of Arc for all they knew. I don't think sex entered into it because I represented the union. The people respected and cared aboout the union. I don't think there was any problem there.

Ken: There was one thing I had in my mind - oh yes. In this strike where there were black workers in one tent and white workers in the other - what was your relationship with the black workers? How could you organize them? You couldn't go to their homes. Or could you?

Bar: You see the strike was called early and there we didn't sign up people ahead of time. The strike was called and then people came out. I don't remember. I know there was a lot of interchange. The two tents were right side by side. I'm sure, knowing what I know now about how racist we are, I probably was paternalistic as heck with the black workers. You know I would probably lean over backwards to do more if I could. It's funny, I cannot remember a single black worker. I've got pictures of them. I remember women workers better than I do men.

I remember one man, this young Mike Smith who came up from the ranks. He was an organizer, but he was not black

Ken: What do you remember about the women workers?

Bar: I remember the Harrington strike, the time we sat and made a quilt all summer. We got to know them by name and after the strike when they had gone back to work before he moved away, I had a little stove in the office and they came in for lunch. I even have the little pot covers from the red pots we had. [pause]. I'm sure I still had that darn leader relationship.

Ken: You spent a lot of time in Washington, D.C. How did you work out this hectic social life you had on week ends with your organizing? I mean, did you consider it a five day a week job?

Bar: [laughs] Well, it was more or less getting the job done. And I think by the time I met up with Dick (he came back in February of thirty seven) that summer the Harry Marx thing was settled. The Supreme Court made the decision that spring. I was organizing on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in those runaway shirt factories when Dick started following me around. How we got away with it, I don't know.

Ken: I mean, did you organize on week ends too. What confused me was you were talking about your social life and parties in Washington and I couldn't equate it with the fact that you were busy organizing.

Bar: You know there would be periods. Actually, when I think about it, it was those last few months when everything had been pretty well buttoned up and we were sort of at loggerheads in Maryland that I started having long week ends. I think in those early years, and especially before I met Dick, I was completely dedicated and if I needed to work week ends I did.

Ken: Did you have any plans for a future with Amalgamated?

Bar: No, and there probably would never have been any because I didn't like being a business agent or doing that sort of nitty gritty stuff. I never even thought beyond. That's another thing about that kind of trait in me that takes life as it comes along. And I never really thought that far ahead.

Ken: Did Potofsky or Hillman or Edy ever discuss with you a future with the Amalgamted?

Bar: No, No.

Ken: So you were hired for a specific job? How did you feel about that?

Bar: Never even thought of it. There was the thing to be done, especially in that particular organizing drive. That's one of the things I wonder about, if my life would have been different if I had sat down. I did fantasize about jobs, and usually got them, but actually never had any real directionof this is what I want to do next.

I remember I wanted to work in the Y, and I fantasized that and got a Y job. I don't remember fantasizing working in the union. I simply quit theøY job and here was Potofsky interviewing me. Now I'm really glad because I think I probably fared better than if I had been worrying in trying to map things out.

Ken: You went with the flow.

Bar: I hate that phrase. Then Dick came along and he wanted, with his old itchy foot, to go to either New Orleans or San Francisco and I hand't been West of the Rockies.

Ken: There is one other thing that also nagged at me. Here you were when you came to San Francisco - you had been active in the trade union movement, and interested in the trade union movement, and had joined the party although you hadn't really done anything about it, Then you went to work at the Emporium when they were organizing through the Retail Clerks. Why weren't you involved?

Bar: I don't know. I don't e ven remember joining But it was not that aggressive an organizing drive at that time as I remember. Somehow they never got to me. You see, I wasn't there that long. I came in as a special worker refinishing furniture.

Ken: I remember what you did, but I'd like to know what you were thinking at the time.

Bar: So it was only a matter of about two months. Then I was laid off. So there wasn't really much time. And I was really worried about Dick who was lying out there in the hospital with that terrible infection.

Ken: It just struck me that it wasn't like you at all. You were a firehorse.

Bar: I agree, and it's a good question. But I think I was just too busy with my own life. Thank god I was taking time to have some life.

Ken: Now we're in San Francisco. Let's get to your social work. As a social worker, what forms did your cooperation with the Workers Alliance and the Unemployed Councils take?

Bar: One of the things was always straining every rule that was laid down in order to get more clothing or more whatever, And even breaking the rules, I'm sure, if we could get away with it. [pause] I don't know. It may have been through the party because. Wasn't Bob Roberts the organizer?

Ken: I think Alex Noral was around then.

Bar: Yes, I met him through the party. Apparently I may have told people- when they I think were needing more and I couldn't do anything I would tell them to join the Workers Alliance/ I'm sure I did, and that's what got me into trouble. But then we were all in trouble with the Yorty Committee, so it didn't really matter.

The Workers Alliance was the most respectable. The Unemployed Councils was more the party oriented.

Ken: When you were organizing did you get any help from the Communist Party, methods and directions?

Bar: We steered away from them like mad. They were so- expletive, expletive - they were the most unrealistic people. I'm sure in every situation they were trying to move in. Especially

Bar: the big Norfolk situation. And even though I was sympathetic I did not approve. But I don't even remember what I disapproved of. I do know I avoided them like the plague as an organizer. I do remember this one fellow I met in Norfolk though that I got to running around with, bleeagh. And I remember when I was in Redding in the Y, I helped them. There was a woman there, and I help her get swimming tickets, and I would give her money. There was a man too. You know they would get only five dollars a week, or something, and they had to scrounge for the rest. As far as helping organize, I stayed clear because they were very unrealistic.

Ken: Was this true in the social workers organizing too?

Bar: Well, we all became party members in the social workers when we were organizing the Social Workers Union.

Ken: I mean did the party trade union committee direct you in how to organize or do union work?

Bar: [pause] It makes me feel like I was very shallow. I remember this, that when we were called before the Yorty Committee we got no darned help from the party as far as working out strategy. I found these old clippings of Oleta [O'Connor Yates] standing up in front of them and telling them off. But we were depending on poor old Hal Sawyer trying to find out some legal way to save our necks.

It's very hard. I think I have such a one track mind, and I brag about my mind being like a tape. But, boy, the reel doesn't work here. I don't remember.

Ken: That's all right. Tell me, what was the difference between the way you organized in the South and the way you organized the social workers.

Bar: [pause] It's a whole different thing. I think with social workers we were organizing not only for (it feels like now I am just trying to dig this out and I'll think of a lot of things afterwards) - we were organizing more on how we could change the whole unemployed picture. God knows we weren't getting that much pay. As a social worker I got one hundred and twenty five dollars a month, and then when I became a supervisor I got one hundred and fifty a month. And when we were paying thirteen dollars a month rent that seemed pretty good in comparison to zero or the thirty dollars a month that people got on unemployment.

Ken: What about organizing social workers?

Bar: I think we called meetings. I'm sure we called meetings. I was the one who did it. They used me because I was the experienced one, whether it was applicable or not. Or because I was a big mouth. All I know is I was going around to meetings all the time and Dick was doing the cooking. I brought home all this literature and he would read it.

Ken: What was your role in the S.C.M.W.A. [State, County and Municipal Workers of America]. Were you an official in the union?

Bar: We didn't have any officials for a while. John Jeffrey then came in as a paid organizer. He was a social worker. I think he was probably president of the union first and then he became the organizer, a paid organizer.

Ken: Then you weren't an officials?

Bar: No. I was probably somebody who carried a lot of responsibility without any title. And when the Yorty Committee came I was one of those called.

Ken: Did you succeed in organizing the union?

Bar: Sure. That's why the Yorty Committee moved in.

Bar: It wasn't because we were Communists. It was because we were organizing a union. And I guess we were demanding certain conditions or more money. (for the unemployed) I'm ashamed I don't remember more.

Ken: Who can remember everything? How did you combine your political interests with your trade union interests?

Bar: That was easy. We considered trade unions a band aid, and our political interests were in changing the society or changing our social structure.

Ken: Well, one woman pointed out that she had made a mistake, and regretted it, that she would constantly bring up in the trade union all these political things that had no relationship to wages, hours and working conditions. She felt this militated against her effectiveness.

Bar: I don't believe that. Actually the only solution for better working conditions is in change. At least then I was sure that you had to overthrow capitalism, or had to have a new kind of social structure.

Ken: Do you think the social workers were more aware of this?

Bar: Right. I think as a bunch of intellectuals they were all accepting a Marxist doctrine. I think what we did was everytime we organized (this sounds terribly subversive), but everytime somebody joined the union if they weren't in the party we

Bar: recruited them. [laughter]

It seems to me that before I left the Amalgamated I was not openly being a communist. But I was very open in what I said about the need for a different society. Knowing me, if I was convinced Marxism was right, I would be spreading it.

Ken: The socialists considered themselves Marxists too, didn't they?

Bar: Yes.

Ken: And the Amalgamated was a bunch of socialists.

Bar: Up to a point -

End of first side of tape

Begin second side

Bar: I never set out to be an Amalgamated organizer or a communist. Those things just happened. They came along, and that was kind of an obvious thing to do.

Ken: When you lost your job because of the Yorty committee, how did you react?

Bar: I don't know. Angry? [pause] And because there were a lot of us we were supportive of each other. I think I didn't even realize the blacklisting that that meant at the time; and that went on through to fifty five. It didn't occur to me too much, but some of the women went back to get their Masters in Social Work. They had the Social Work school at Cal. Of course I was selling real estate at the time, and didn't know that I was going to be discontinued on that. But I remember thiinking I was so blacklisted that I didn't think I could get into the school; that they wouldn't accept me. They probably wouldn't have. I don't know. Other people who had been party members but were not so well known got in. Now you can get in,

Bar: but at that time they didn't accept anybody over fifty for the graduate program. But I didn't realize that at the time I was fired.

I must have gone back to work at the Emporium or something. That was always my meal ticket because Dick had not yet gone back to sea, and they had that little rooming house, he and Harold Seale.

Ken: What other support did you getoutside

Bar: of supporting each other - what moral or physical support?

Bar: None whatsover that I remember.

Ken: From the community, or the party?

Bar: Heavens no. The party never gave anybody and real individual support. I remember Harold, though he was a very conservative guy, he didn't think that was fair. I didn't have many friends outside. Megan always laughed about I was her inside contact and she was my outside contact. But we didn't have many friends outside of the movement. All our parties and all our social life was around raising money for the People's World.

Ken: I didn't mean you personally,but the group, and the reaction to the Yorty Committee by the community.

Bar: I don't remember, but there was no way to give support at that time. Now the people in Stockton who went to jail, there must have been some kind of support for them - but we were just out and I don't remember anything being done about it.

Ken: I never asked too many questions about your being in the communist party so I want to talk a little bit about your radicalism now. You gave me a couple of letters that I copied about your writing to your family; and you could tell that there was growing radicalism and you were trying to let them know what you were doing. How did they react to this?

Bar: It was never stated. This one sister that I'm really close to now, she was rabid about my being a communist. I stopped home in thirty seven, and I came in with Dick; and I couldn't have been treated any nicer. They believed all this horror stuff about communists. Then when Dick and I were home in forty six there was never any issue made of it. And when we were back in sixty-nine I was no longer in. I know they didn't approve, but I didn't have a close connection. Like with dad and mom, I regret that I didn't have a closer relationship with them in their older years . So I didn't know them. I was very self centered and busy saving the world.

Ken: What about Ivan when you joined the communist party?

Bar: I wasn't with him. But he always said he was a white Russian when he came to this country but he got pinker all the time the longer he stayed.

Ken: Here's another thing I don't understand - you joined, but you never belonged to a unit or a group and they never gave you any direction.

Bar: No.

Ken: Why not?

Bar: I think I interviewed Browder. I was out in the field and there was no way. That's when I think these guys would come in to see me, the party people like Froika Schwartzman, the one that I met in Norfolk and had a roaring affair with him. But there was no way. There were no units or branches as we knew them.

Ken: When they came to see you and tried to give you direction and you knew you were doing better, how did you push them off?

Bar: With Froika, we used to talk a lot about things. [pause] I don't know. I really don't know. I paid no dues or anything. It's just that I went in and joined. I had no responsibilities. I think it was because I was moving around.

Ken: How did you feel about loosing so many jobs because of your political leanings.

Bar: They were always within the framework of a just cause. When I lost my real estate license I knew I was right and I didn't enjoy it though. I wasn't a martyr or anything. I wasn't ever fired for cause, like at the Y it was because of the strikers. I wasn't fired from the Amalgamated. Then I was fired from the social work job because of Yorty. Then the real estate because I sold to blacks. So I was always right. And you know you can't get too upset about being fired for doing what you believed in. It was always within the framework and there was always a certain amount of support.

Ken: Did you consider yourself a Marxist?

Bar: Oh sure. Definitely. When Dick would come home after being at sea for months we would read and study. We would spend hours at home in August Alley reading and studying so we would know more. I always remember that Dick said, after the war, when Bittleman was writing.

Ken: Oh yes. [had gone into that before]. How did being a Marxist help you in the course of your life? Or hinder you ?

Bar: No. I think it was a help. I would not trade that long experience. It wasn't that long, from thirty six when I wasn't doing too much, and I left in fifty two or fifty three. It wasn't because of the McCarthy thibg. It may have been indirectly, but it was because

Bar: we were fighting among ourselves. I became a Maoist. I think that I learned to think as far as I could think. When I think back now about how much I drank those days and what alcohol does to your brain, I'm amazed that we thought of anything. I learned to think. and I learned to be more disciplined. There were good friendships. I would put it down as plus. I wouldn't do it again. I'd rather we'd have been that than the people I know that weren't.

Ken: Did you accept party discipline when you were given assignments whether you agreed with them or not.

Bar: Oh God yes. You know that. I never even knew enough to disagree. I just went along. I remember once I had lunch with Bill Schneiderman (eehhh) and I remember telling him that I felt I was sort of a conduit through which party policy could be explained to people. I had no sense of myself as a person. I was part of a machine. I was that way when I was a church worker. So it's sort of a pattern that whatever I believed in, I was one of the ways of that being spread around. During the Duclos period I wasn't on the Foster side. I can't remember which side I was on how. I know at the beginning when we were having all these big meetings when Archie Brown and Anita Whitney were fighting the Browder line, as much as I respected and admired them I had no opinions of my own. I accepted. That's when we moved to Mill Valley though and I became less and less involved. There was some kind of a little branch meeting down South of Market that I went to. Some of those dear people there. But I never was a rebel that I can remember. Too bad.

Ken: Did being a communist influence your reading or your cultural activities in any way?

Bar: Sure.

Ken: How?

Bar: I think it increasedmy ability for understanding the quality of reading. I read better than I would have had I not had that experience.

Of course my cultural life has been a big zero in many ways. The highlight would be the Moiseyev dancers, and our feelings for them I am sure came out of our feelings for the Soviet Union.

I know this is a little extraneous, but I can hold my brief in many ways for the Soviet Union, but I think of Breshnev being drunk on vodka,if the the newspapers are telling the truth, I still am very angry at this woman - this orchestrated campaign that is going on in this country is a campaign to change our foreign policy. I don't think she is just being used. I think she is a very conscious person doing it.

You know I can disapprove of a lot of opprssion that the Soviet Union does, but I don't think it's our business to try and change it. I am just furious with Carter, and now Mary McGory reminds him of the Wilmington ten and the people Andy Young are talking about. So inside of me, I am still a very loyal Marxist in the broadest sense of the term. I still consider myself on that side of the fence.

Ken: Marxism doesn't necessarily mean supporting the Soviet Union.

Bar: Of course it doesn't. But down inside of me I still have that protective feeling.

Ken: Was it because you were trained in thinking that?

Bar: It's a fact too that destruction of the Soviet Union would be putting back civilization a long long while if we should get into an atomic war. I realized that the other day when I was feeling very angry at this woman and not sympathetic with her at all. You know I am supporting women who are put upon because their husbands are suffering and

Bar: so on. You know, Lucy, through the years a part of that training gives a sensitivity to what is true. And you smell what is not honest and what is not true. And I think I am very sensitive to current events and what is going on and what is true and what isn't. And when the odor begins to rise you pick it up. And with this woman I am very angry, and there are enough letters in the Chronicle to show other people are feeling the same way. She has her own movie crew along. You know, it is an orchestrated thing.

Ken: What about the F.B.I. Did they ever harrass you?

Bar: Not too much. I remember they followed me when Harvey was staying with us during the undercover days. When I had this debacle with the real estate thing he was living with us. Obviously he had to move. And I drove him to San Rafael to catch a bus. And when he got out [laughs] here was the local F.B.I. guy right behind us. So I don't know how much they had followed me around.

And then when we moved to Westwood I think I told about their coming to talk to Dick a whole afternoon when I wasn't home.

Ken: You didn't.

Bar: Well, it was after he was sick.This was after nineteen sixty. I think there was publicity in the paper here about my selling to blacks. They were trying to get a law passed by the Board of Supervisors about civil rights. Anyway my name had been brought up over and over again in the papers. And I wonder now when I get so much publicity why they don't bother with me. I think they've really given up. They came and visited Dick one afternoon. And he was so lonesome he would just talk to anybody. There was only one. Then two of them came back the next morning. I must have known, somehow,

Bar: they were coming back because they told me that Dick didn't know who he was. And I said that's even worse then that you would talk with this sick man and not even identify yourself - to use him. And I remember chasing them off - being just furious - on that back deck of ours. I don't know if I picked up something. But I remember I was just furious. And they wanted to know about my activities in the forties, and I said, "As if you don't know." I don't know how much they hung around up there. I was organizing the garden club and the rock hounds. It was harrassment.

Ken: There are just a couple of more questions about the Party. They were great on equality - men and women are just the same and should be treated equally. What was your experience in the party as to equality of treatment?

Bar: It seems to me I thought I was on the women's side, but I really didn't understand what the women's movement was. I didn't understand that all our politicians are men. I didn't understand that the whole power structure was men. I think I was independent enough. Dick was the chairperson for the Women's Commission in the party because he was so nice [laughs]. I think my consciousness wasn't raised that much . I fought my own battles. I wasn't aware of it in the sense like Louise [Lambert] may be now.

Ken: Do you remember anything about the Women's Commission?

Bar: I do because this woman was very active (she would die if her name was brought up here), and Aubrey was very active, and Hazel. But Dick was named the chairperson- the chairman [laughter] of the women's commission, and we were trying to settle womens's problems.

There were a lot of women at that time who wanted to stay home and have their babies.

Ken: This was after the war?

Bar: Yes. And I was never too concerned about that. If they wanted to that was fine with me. I think I have never been much on women's lib. Right now, this work I'm doing now where women get stuck with taking care of sick husbands - that's a women's problem. And I am really seeing it as a women's problem in a new way than I did then. I'm afraid I wasn't as understanding as I should have been. As I look back now it feels like I didn't know anything.

Ken: I'm just curious about what the women's commission did. Did they study, or did they follow through and do anything about it?

Bar: Well, by now, I think this was the time we began to disintegrate. I think this was set up after the war, after the Duclos letter and such, and things were disintegrating.

Ken: You mentioned you dropped out. Did you just quit going to meetings?

Bar: I just quit going to meetings because there were just a few of us who were left in this branch. And I remember when _____ came in, he was such a mild guy. He was our district representative and he came in to really give us hell. And we weren't anybody who was going to be given hell to by some upstart.

Ken: Were you shunned afterwards. Sometimes when people dropped out, nobody talked to them.

Bar: That was more during the the time of the Browder-Foster split, and that was carried over. Like the Olsens - here was. Here was Lennie, the President of the Carpenters Local, and he had been in the Foster camp, - Dick was never in any camp, really, and he said he wouldnot leave until they kicked him out. It just disintegrated.

Bar: I remember the last meeting we had.There were four of us. We considered ourselves Maoists and that was not appropriate. I guess it still isn't.

Let's see, that was in fifty two or fifty three and I had lost my job in real estate and gone to work for Hershel. There were some years there when we had a hard time. Nick was carpentering and I don't know what I was doing.I worked as a gardener at a dollar and a half an hour. I was really blacklisted. And we hadno social life.

Ken: You could continue, then,to be friends with members?

Bar: I think you just chose, and the ones you were friends with you just were friends with.. And we did have some other friends I had made during my real estate days, people I had sold houses to. I think a few writers and their wives. When I think of that period, I was drinking an awful lot.

Ken: Let's get down to some women's questions now. What special assets did you bring to a job that would be different from what a man would bring to the same job? Say as an organizer.

Bar: I can think of one right off - the fact that it was mostly women/we were organizing, and as a woman I was more trusted ; and that I cared about them in a different way than the men organizers did. The men organizers never treated them as sex objects, but they were objects in and industrial system that needed to be organized not only for their own good, but for the overall good. And I saw them as human beings, I'm sure that's it. That comes off easy.I related to them as a woman. Does that answer?

Ken: That's one answer. There are a lot of answers people could give. In your life what things happened

t to you as a woman (outside of your abortions) that wouldn't have happened had you been a man.

Bar: I don't know. I think about it sometimes - what stops me from going forward in this rat race, like being a politician. With my talents and my personality it was logical. It fitted in with the kind of thing how people moved up in those days. I would probably have been a big shot politician had I been a man. Different things held me back, whatever they were,that never let me accomplish all of my potential. Each time that thing, whatever it was, seemed to hold me back. When I think of the male politicians I know who had all these limitations and yet because they weremmen and were agressive and had whatever it took they got in. I had all those qualities I think. I don't regret not having it. Believe me. But I do think that may be an answer.

Ken: What about the Equal Rights Amendment? Do you agree with that?

Bar: Right.

Ken: A lot of women are still fighting it on the basis that the rights that women fought for so long would go by the board..

Bar: I think we are strong enough now that we don't need those. When I didn't support the Women's Party back in thirty five that was my argument because I had been brainwashed by the Y - that women had to have protective legislation. At that time we did like the workers had to have protective legislation in order to organize unions. That's when there was a big drive. I remember Mrs. Raymond Graham Swing talking about it. I played poker with that bunch. And I didn't have any understanding of it at that time. Now the fact that the women's movement could rally that huge rally in Washington a few weeks ago and turn these birds around, it looks like there will be an extension, and Phyllis Shafley having pink kittens all over the place

July 26, 1978 - begin tape #3

Bar: Partly because of this struggle I am going through we ended up [the last series of interviews in 1976] I was going to Emeritus College, and now I've gone into a whole new phase of activity which is more like my old time stuff in support of women who have sick husbands. And money is one of the limiting things.

Now that Dick is in a convalescent hospital and I need the money that is paid for Medical patients there money is a terribly imporant thing right now. It has been before,but I was just overlooking it. Dick and I wouldn't need to be separated if there were facilities so that he could be taken care of, and that I didn't have to give all that physical care. Then we could still be together.

People who are still hanging on like I did,if they could have help and there was money enough to buy the kind of help that is needed (and you don't want untrained people. It would have to be professional help) - If I could have had that in some way I probably wouldn't have gone down hill and could have kept on with Dick, and we wouldn't have to be separated.

So I think I was Pollanish in saying - money was not my goal ever,but we should have had enough money to be able to handle our situation so it wasn't so hard on me.

Ken: And the same thing is hard on other women too?

Bar: Yes, and the thing I am going into now about loss and grief and so on, I can see in them what I went through and didn't recognize. I think that's all I need to say about money.

Ken: Money could help you now, but in other circumstances other things could help. It wouldn't have to be money. If there was a way for you to be with Dick.

Ken: If you had home care and didn't have to pay.

Bar: That's what I'm trying to say. I guess at that period in the other interview I was feeling so much better from what I had been that I wasn't recognizing the tremendous need for facilities and professional help in the care of people who are hurt. When I see what goes on in a convalescent hospital, but we aren't on that.

Ken: Well, you are taking care of that now in your public life. Let's get back to the Equal Rights Amendment. I was going to ask you what you thought the difference was between the suffrage movement and the equal rights movement today.

Bar: I wasn't involved.

Ken: Some people say that women are not really capable of doing organizational work or working as heads of companies because they are too emotional; that they break down at a key point in situations. Do you think this is true?

Bar: I think what happens is that the women who make it become more like the men and they lose the qualities that women have been able to salvage out of this culture whereas the macho man who can't cry gets ulcers and heart attacks, the women have to kind of take on those qualities too to survive in the business world.

It's an interesting thing and this thought just came into my head that out of this crazy cut-throat competition and this awful system under which we live, I hate to see women have to be like that in order to survive. I guess they have to. Women are so much smarter than men, I think. They <u>really</u> are smarter, brainwise.

Ken: Why do you say that?

Bar: I think they are. I think they think better. I have so many stereotypes floating around. I think of the big male executive, whatever thinking he does, there's no real basic, ultimate, rational thought

Bar: because he's just thinking about how the company can make more money. That's not basic thinking. Women can do that just as well as men.

I don't know what's happened back in the Soviet Union and China where women do have a lot more responsibilities as heads of big things and do it very well.

Ken: Do you think a woman could, say, be the president of Standard Oil and maintain the qualities that women should have.

Bar: There's the stereotype. What are the qualities?

Ken: That's the next question. What are the qualities that you think women should have which are different than men's qualities?

Bar: I would say this, that the men are the ones that need to be changed. The qualities of being a human being, a fine sensitive human being (which all men are underneath); and if there's anything I've learned in these past few years is seeing every human being as a good, lovely, potential person. But they get covered up with all the crap. And that's what helps me now to be so caring about all kinds of people. And men particularely because this trip has been laid on them that they have to be strong. And that's what kills them. That's what breaks them down. I don't want women to become like men. I want men to become like women. And under this dog-eat-dog system I don't know how it can be done. You've got to be completely ruthless.

In politics it's different. There is this beautiful young woman in our Legislature here in California, Eggenberger. She is just beautiful. They (women in politics) have all the qualities of a stereotype of a woman, and yet they are very effective. In politics I think it's easier than in business. So maybe that's where women

Bar: need to go. Sure, it's where they need to go first. Who am I kidding that the Legislature comes first. We know business comes first; that the business tells the Legislature what to do.

I really feel very sorry for men. Even our big machos, because they are a victim of the culture too, and the system. I don't know what's going to happen to this system. It looks like it ought to break down now. Here we are at the mercy of the Japanese, rah, rah. Ask me a little more on the woman thing because I feel a little like a maverick. I'm completely in support of everything that the women's movement does. And all the good thinking women, they are not throwing the men out. We have to emancipate them. The men are just as much the victims - no, the women are more the victims. There's no question about that. We've been victimized more by the culture and having to have a role.But the men have been put into the oppressor role by the system. And it's the damn system that you have to go back to.

Ken: Do you think the women are right in isolating themselves from the men and having their own organizations?

Bar: Oh yes. Definitely. And if you can get the men to go along, that's fine. And there is a men's movement now within our own community in R.C. I got a Ms. magazine. I finally subscribed again because I felt I needed to be up on it. There had been a men's conference in St. Louis. And it's been hard for them because they are accused of being gay if they hug each other. But the men were loving and caring about each other. There were all kinds of people at this conference. So there is hope that the men are going to change too. But I don't know how many of them can change as long as we have this system.

Bar: Talking about Ms. magazine, there's something I was going to say when that tape ended a while ago. It's a validation of myself that I'm very pleased about. My head is still involved in what is going on in the world. I can't read a lot of the tripey stuff that's in the Chronicle - briefings, articles and so on. Some of them are just boreing. But I actually still feel very involved in what's going on in the world, and wanting to know what's going on. I have friends who don't take a paper, don't listen to the news. Even though there is a lot of tripe going on I'm real pleased. I'm going to be able to afford to take more magazines. I enjoy reading them and I'm denying myself. I read Time. I got it for Dick. I tried reading one of the competitiyes a while and I didn't like it at all. It didn't have book reviews. So I'm really pleased that my head is still interested in what is going on.

Ken: One last question. These values when you were a child. Do you still maintain these same values you had when you were a child?

Bar: I wonder. I would say that the values increased in the sense that my feeling about people. What were the values? Certainly the work ethic and I haven't dropped any of that [laughs]. One of the things that is considered not good in these days is the pattern of wanting to do for other people. And I'm sure that that is a needy pattern in a sense, and somehow it's always been useful to me. It's been my own growth too, so that I don't negate it. I really don't think they've changed that much bedause they were just simple human things, living in a world of human beings. Do you think of any that might have changed?

Ken: A lot of people change over the years. For instance one value that might have changed is the matter of sex. It always amuses me that it

Ken: wasn't necessarily immoral to have intercourse, but it was immoral to have a child. In other words it wasn't immoral to have intercourse. It was immoral to get caught.

Bar: That is not the way I feel about it. No, no, no.

Ken: That is when you were brought up you were afraid to have intercourse because you would be pregnant.

Bar: Right. I suppose that was the value system and it still is - that you don't have a child out of wedlock. Now it's beginning to be more accepted. That you don't have a child unless you are married, that would have changed certainly. And having an abortion was not because being pregnant was bad, it was because I couldn't handle a child at that time. I don't think the old value of not wanting to get pregnant was the same. The same thing didn't hold. It was just the inconvenience of having a child at a time when I was doing something else. I don't think those quite tie together. I'm glad you brought that up bedause I hadn't thought of it that way. It's funny, that I never think of as a real moral value, whether you are pregnant or not. That is just a cultural thing. When I was pregnant I don't think I had the same feelings. It was just my own personal need at that time. If I had wanted to have a child then I would have had it regardless of what the world was aaying, I think. That didn't enter into it, I think, at all.

Ken: We've taken up way over two hours, and I think I've done you in.

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